Encounter

March 1976 50p

Malcolm Bradbury
Short Story

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Rhetoric of Prime Ministers

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Saint-John Perse

François Bondy
Thorez and Aragon

Eric Ashby
A second look at Doom

William Letwin
Adam Smith

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Remembering Kurt Hahn

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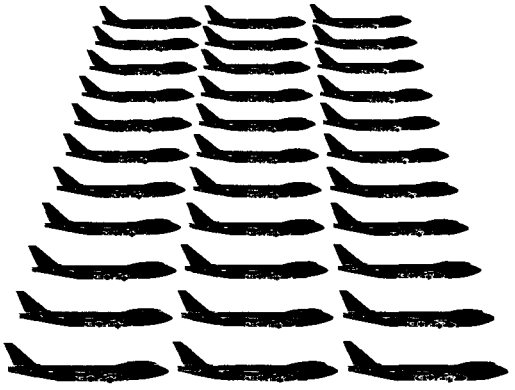

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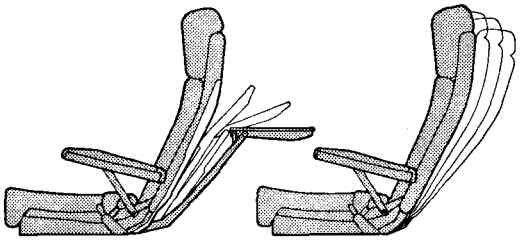

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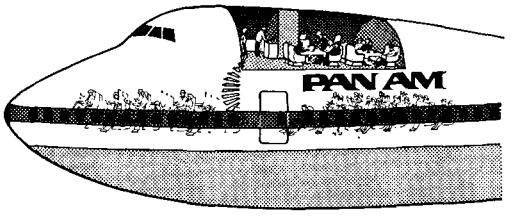

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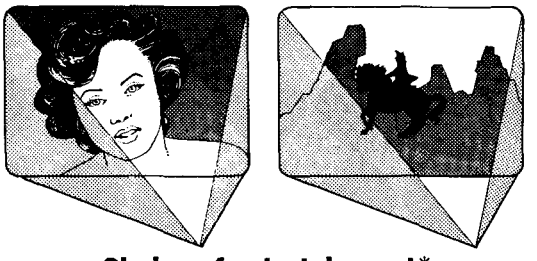

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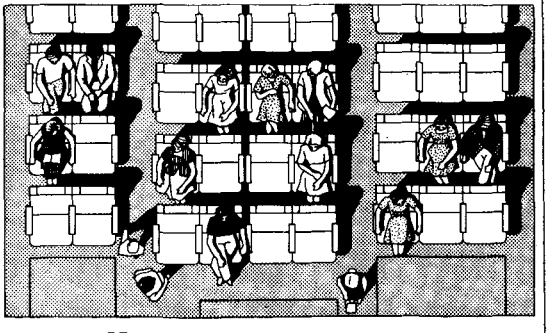

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MARCH 1976

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Malcolm Bradbury

Composition

WE ARE, for the purposes of this story, in the courthouse square of a very small middlewestern town. It is a hot, sunny afternoon in the September of an old, tumultuous year, 1971. In the centre of the square stands the courthouse itself, a Victorian building of no distinction, with defensive cannon at every corner. In front of the courthouse stands a statue, of a soldier, his rifle in a negative position, a Henry Fleming who has been perpetuated as he ducks out of the Civil War. On the copper roof of the building, gone green, stands a row of pigeons, depositing, in some vague evolutionary gesture, quantities of new guano on top of the old guano. Now from a corner of the square there enters the one Greyhound bus of the day, which comes down from the state capital, two hundred miles to the north, where they keep all the money and the record of accurate time. The bus has aluminium sides, green glareproof windows, and a lavatory; it circles the square, slows, and stops at the depot, a telephone booth outside Lee's Diner. The driver, J. L. Gruner, safe, reliable, courteous, levers open the door; steps unfold; down the steps there descends, into the literal level of reality, in a brown suit, carrying a mackintosh on one arm, his hair long, his face lightly bearded, hot, but in good order, a person, a young English person, named William Honeywell. His feet touch the board sidewalk, crisp with pigeon dung. He does not look around, or move far. Instead he stands close to the aluminium flank of the bus, which coughs diesel fumes at him, for the engine is still running, as J. L. Gruner gets down and unlocks the flaps under which this William's luggage is concealed. J. L. Gruner has been William's guide and conductor for most of the day, virtually ever since that early morning hour when William arrived, on the Boeing 727, after a transatlantic and then a transcontinental flight, in what pleases to call itself America. It is J. L. Gruner who took William's ticket as he stood in the bleak bus station, amid the lockers and the bums, in the state capital, two hundred miles to the north; it is J. L. Gruner who, his face reassuringly reflected in the driving mirror, has driven him for four hours over rough concrete highways that flipped rhythmically under the tyres, unravelled straight ahead into the haze, flashing him past fields containing withered cornstalks and rooting hogs, past sorghum mills and Burmah Shave signs, past the Wishy Washy and the Dreme-EZ Motel, to deposit him on this wooden sidewalk, here. "Okay, pal, which is it?" asks J. L. Gruner. William points out his big Antler suitcase, his little boxed typewriter, with their new airline labels; Gruner puts them out on to the sidewalk. "Thank you", says William. "Or righty", says Gruner, and then he climbs back into the bus and, from the operator's seat, clangs shut the big aluminium door. The diesel engine whirrs; the bus moves, circles the square again, finds an exit, and takes off into the great American steppeland.

William stands, beside his luggage, on the pigeon dung, in the dust, in his brown suit, holding his mackintosh. He is here. This is his beginning. He sniffs the smell, tastes the air, of the town. It has a faded, dusty note, as if generations of farmhands have shaken out their coveralls here. Around the little square are two storey buildings in wood and brick. There is a J. C. Penney, a Woolworth, a Floresheim Shoe, a Macdonald Hamburger, a gas station with a sign saying "We really are very friendly" and no people, and seven parking meters. A big dog lopes down the gutter. A cat comes out of J. C. Penney. A

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person laughs somewhere in Lee's Diner. Somewhere out there Nixon is President. The marquee of the tiny movie house advertises *I Was a Teenage Embalmer*. The Pentagon Papers have appeared in the *New York Times*. A sign on the novelty store says "Worms." They are having a war in Viet Nam. They are having a sale on hoes at J. C. Penney. William goes on standing; he is here, such as it is. Somewhere in this town, if it is the right town and not the wrong town, there is a state university; the university has many students and a library containing the papers of many famous writers, none of whom has ever lived here. At that university, if it is here, and not there, William will teach Freshman Composition, a course in existential awareness and the accurate use of the comma. But is it here? On the steps of the courthouse, in the sunlight, a row of elderly farmers in faded denim coveralls sits; they have been there all the time, watching William unblinkingly. William, one eye on his luggage, left on the sidewalk, moves, crosses over to them. They inspect him as he comes: the suit, the mackintosh, the longish red hair. William stops before them; he says, to the oldest and so presumably the wisest, "Excuse me, please." "What's that, boy?" asks the man, spitting into the dust. "Do you know", asks William, looking around, a mystification on his face, "where I can find the university?" The man screws his eyes, thinks for a moment, spits again, and says: "Didn't know it was lost, son." His eyes glaze, cackles come from the others, and the courthouse pigeons drop dung around the outer edges of the encounter, plainspeaking America triumphing over fancy Europe.

WILLIAM, STANDING THERE, knows himself. He is not a naif. He has read widely in literature and profited emotionally from the experience. He has taken all the lesser drugs, has had two mistresses, and assisted one of them through a neurotic abortion. He has travelled as far as Turkey, has a good graduate student knowledge of structuralism; he has been hit by a policeman with a truncheon at a political demonstration in London, been in a sit-in, and written two pop songs. He has not been to America before, but he has been Americanised, by cultural artefacts and universal modernisation, and he knows it by image and by instinct. He has read America in many books. He has a part-written thesis in his luggage, on the disjunctive city in contemporary American fiction, and he has libertarian intentions. He has even come here hoping to find a little bit more of himself, to extend his being beyond its present circumscriptions and circumference. He has existential expectations, based on self-knowledge and sex. But he knows he is resident in a very old story: only I myself am novel, he thinks, the experience is not. Nixon is president. There are the Pentagon Papers. The Viet Nam war, against which he has protested, goes on. There are black ghettos, poverty programmes, corruptions and conspiracies; actuality is continually outdoing our talents. History is moving apace, and is everywhere; the simple literary redemptions are hard to sustain. He wants more, deserves more, than a replay of old fictions, a plain and simple reality. "Great, thanks", he says, and walks back across the street to his lonely baggage on the sidewalk. Stasis reigns. What, he thinks, next?

"Hey", shouts one of the other farmers, pointing down the street. About half a block down, in front of Sears Roebuck, there is a cab, with a sign on the side saying "Schuler Taxi"; it was not there before. The driver sits inside and watches William unmovingly; he watches as he lifts his heavy bag and his little case, the mackintosh over the shoulder, down the sidewalk. He watches, through the mirror, as William opens the rear door and lifts the luggage inside. "Baggage goes in the trunk", he says, when William is finished. "In the boot?" asks William. "In the trunk", says the man. It is an ancient terminological game they are playing, thinks William, as he heaves out the bag and puts it in the binominal place, the rehearsal, a million times in, of a traditional, weary encounter; the lousy part is it also strains the back. "Whar to?" asks the man, when William is back in the cab. William hands him the slip of paper that has been sent to him, back in England, stating his dormitory reservation (exhausted with dialogue). The man starts the cab, tours the square, strikes out into the hinterland. They pass the Astoria Motel, which advertises two

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for the price of one, and through a residential section where housewives sit on frame porches in mail-order sportswear. "Whar ya frum, boy?" asks the man. Now there are stone houses with Greek letters over the doors, and young men lying outside them in Ford Mustangs, with their feet over the side. "England", says William. There are Victorian semi-churches, covered in red ivy, a large football stadium, a television mast. "England, huh? Hoity toity", says the man. There is a long low building outside which students in sweatshirts are throwing a frisbee in great arcs. "Five dollars", says the man, "You'll like it here better."

"Ting", says a voice, as William, carrying his bags, pushes open the door of the graduate dormitory and walks into the hall, "Ting." "I've just arrived from England, fresh to teach Freshman Composition, and I have a room booked here", says William to a small oriental student in a collegiate sweater, who sits in a small wooden armchair in a cubicle, reading Lemon and Reis, eds., *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*. "Ting", says the student, getting up and shaking his hand. There is a metal bunk bed, an armchair, a small desk, and a lamp on a snaky spiral support, which looks capable of wrapping itself around the arm as you wrote under its light (a minor symbol, a serpent for the American Eden), in the first-floor room this student leads him to. "Fine, thanks", says William. "Ting", says the student. William begins to unpack: his clothes, his medicines, his teaching notes, his small flute, his part-thesis, the leather toilet case given him, with tears at Heathrow, by the girl with the abortion. He sits on the bed. There is a knock at the door. "Ting", says the oriental student, "I take you to where we eat." But it is evening now: the sun has suddenly withdrawn, leaving a faint chill, and William has been awake for a ridiculous number of hours. He has culture-shock, jet-lag, a coffee hangover, the plasticised remnant of an airline meal knotted in his stomach. He says he will sleep. He finds a bathroom, with no doors on the stalls, and an Arab sitting on one of the bowls. He urinates, returns to his room, undresses, gets into the iron bed. There are a few brief, disorienting images in his head—of a girl in a caftan who sat across the aisle in the jet, of a man in the bus depot in the state capital who asked for a quarter and then, hearing his accent, raised it to fifty cents—such as travellers have to make them feel lonely; but they are purged by unconsciousness, and he is asleep, his red hair on an American pillow.

IT IS MUCH LATER, in the middle of the American night, when he wakens to a curious noise. He gets up and, in winceyette pyjamas, goes to the window. The landscape suddenly judders and explodes; the rural plain which stretches beyond the window is lit by a bright green glare. In it, white barns flash into existence, then expire. A torrential rain is falling. Blackness resumes. "Cling, cling", goes a noise. There is a strange hooting and a roaring. The noise, mobile, comes closer. On the right of the blank composition a slowly gyrating, long beam of light appears, its shifting angle casting itself first toward William, then away again. Another green flash lights up the fast-running sky; William sees that the shrieking torch is his first American train. It grinds nearer; it says "Cling, cling"; it passes hard by the dormitory. As it does so, a bolt snaps down and catches a power sub-station, mounted fecklessly on a pole across the street. It explodes with a flash and a roar. There is a scream, as of pleasure. In the flash, William has seen a human figure. On the grass below his window it stands, a fat, naked girl, her legs wide apart, pushing up her loose large breasts to take on to them the impact of the rain. There is a knock at the door. "Ting", says a voice. "Ting who?" asks William. "Bill Ting", says the voice, "Your counsellor." William goes and opens the door. Ting, very little, stands there, in shortie pyjamas. "Please shut window", says Ting. "Water coming through floor into my loom downstair." "I'm sorry", says William. "Also, offplint of article for loo to lead. For English opinion. Source, *Victorian Studies*." Another pleasured scream shrills from outside. "Who wrote it?" asks William. "Ting", says Ting. "On Charlotte Blontë." "Look, I'll read it tomorrow", says William, putting the offplint on his desk, "Goodnight." He goes back to the window, to shut it. It is entirely black outside, too black to see the girl: the storm is subsiding. "Okay, America", says William to

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the dark world beyond the fly-screen, "We'll let you know."

William stands in a puddle and closes the window; but the truth is that, despite himself, he is at last impressed. He knows himself under the agency of divine comedians of a somewhat different stamp from those whose work he has always known, new gods with a fancier taste in apocalyptics, quite like those of the modern critics he reads. He is here. What will he do? He will teach freshmen composition, demonstrate the orderly economy of language, the complexes of *langue* and *parole*, cleanse the tools. He gets into bed, he puts down his head. He thinks of the girl with the abortion, dark-haired, a little fat. It is an imperfect image: a photograph into which the light has been let. From somewhere below a typewriter clatters. It reaches the end of a line: "Ping", it says. He starts to weep, he goes to sleep.

"YOU SEEM TO BE A WELL SET-UP, morally earnest young man", says Fardiman. "The sort of person who takes literature seriously, and teaches it good. So why worry?" Outside the window, on the grass, blue jays screech offensively. A man with a leaf-collecting machine comes by under the trees, collecting a faint harvest from the first of the fall. Two dogs copulate over by the Business Building. It is a bright fall day; William can see all this from the screened wooden window of the office in Humanities Hall he shares with five other graduate assistants. He has a large desk by the window, a desk with inkstains in the drawers and a large, high-backed, swivel chair. William is grieving. He has been teaching now for just over a week, and has met all his classes, twice, in the Chemistry Building, his hands dangling loosely in the pedagogic sink, or absent-mindedly turning on the gas-taps, as he stares outward at the massive ethnic mix of the faces before him. Overcoming timidity, if not terror, he has begun work; he has told them where his office is, writing a map on the board so they can all find him, and where the library is, and where they are; he has asked them to write for him the first theme on the official schedule, on the demanding topic of "My Home Town." Now these themes have come in, deposited in a pocket outside his office door; he is marking them now. Fardiman sits at the next desk, writing a report for the graduate seminar on Milton he is taking; he keeps a copy of the *Karma Sutra* on his desk and a cookie jar filled with his mother's apple cake between the readers in the bookcase. William is chewing apple cake as he reads. "I am", says William, turning to Fardiman, "I'm a devotee of Leavis, though I disapprove of his culturally right-wing position, and also his interpretation of *Women In Love*. I'm also into semiotics, and I'm somewhat influenced by Frank Kermode." "I was reading his *What's the Sense of an Ending?*" says Fardiman. "It stirred me in the gut. It gives me faith in my own clerkly scepticism. Now *that's* what you could use some of, right now." "I've read and digested Roland Barthes and the *Tel Quel* school", says William. "I'm into Adorno and Horkheimer and revisionist Marxist aesthetics. I'm interested in alternative education. I've got a part to play. But, Fardiman, what's it all got to do with essays about 'My Home Town'?" "It's all phenomenological discourse", says Fardiman. "Writing degree about twenty below. It has a beginning, a middle and an end, not usually in that order, but this it shares with most modern literature. It adds up to the cumulative fund of words in the universe; and, William, we want those words *right*." William groans; he pushes the theme he has been reading across on to Fardiman's desk, which, in the cramped space, is up against his own. The theme begins: "The poeple which lives in my home town is good folks, bad folks, rich folks, poor folks, white and some black, go to church and not go to church, and many other things."

Fardiman puts down his apple cake and, picking up a red pen, he looks at the theme. While he reads, William swivels his chair and stares again through the screened window. Blue jays screech. The leaf-collector with the leaf-collector collects the leaves. The dogs are separate and distinct. Along the pathway between Humanities and Business, so ironically juxtaposed, as if by some cynically literary architect, a procession begins. The bells have rung in the classrooms and the students pour along the paths, in bright clothes, the girls making cradles of their arms

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to carry their textbooks and notecases in. Some of the students, a distinctive group, the girls without bras, the men with long hair and Afros, go by with anti-war placards; there is a political demonstration that day. William has a sense of his pointless little face staring through the dark grilled screens at what they are doing. But he is here to read what they have written, which seems to bear no resemblance to what they are doing, to have no connection with these minds and bodies. "It's not a great start", says Fardiman, putting down the theme. "But how would you have started it?" "It's not *my* home town", says William. "There are all kinds of ways to start a piece about a town, if you want to start one." "Talk to him", says Fardiman. "Try to get him to do it more personally. But there's real potential here." "There is?" asks William, staring at Fardiman. "Sure there is. This kid is a comma artist. I know it doesn't sound much, with the world the way it is, and *Tel Quel* the way it is, but those are real good commas." William looks at Fardiman, who has marched on the Pentagon, and reads Ilich, and will refuse to be drafted; and he sees no light. "Don't be anxious", says Fardiman. "It's your task to take these self-satisfied, super-sensual oafs and lead them, through the study of sentences, into becoming mature, questioning, critical, politically-alert individuals like ourselves." "With better hang-ups", says William. "Right", says Fardiman. "Alternatively, I guess, you could move, yourself, in the other direction, and have fun."

WILLIAM LOOKS OUT of the window. The trees on campus start to turn brown, orange, and maroon, in a brilliant fall display. The air grows colder. The leaf-collector collects many a leaf. William puts on thicker clothes, and visits the few student bars that serve the specially diluted beer that will protect them. He goes to the Macdonald Hamburger stand, and to graduate student parties to smoke pot, and to political meetings. He writes letters home to the girl with the abortion, and washes his clothes in the laundry down in the basement of the graduate dormitory, shown the way by Ting. He eats Fardiman's apple cake and grades many themes. He stands behind his desk in the Chemistry Building, three days a week, and tells his students about Carnaby Street and the Portobello Road. He goes to the Teaching Round Table, where all the graduate assistants sit around a square table and discuss their problems, about grading themes, about flunking students who might be drafted, about why are we here, about the falling jobs market. Sensing an over-devotion to diurnal reality among his students, even the politically active ones, he tries to find his way to truth by perplexing them with the complexity of fictions, reading them Nabokov, Coover, Barthelme, asking why writers write like that. "Finks", says one student, Miss Armfelt, an energetic little girl who interrupts his classes by asking him about their relevance, abusing Nixon, talking about the Third World, speaking for Women's Rights, condemning the conformity of the course, the uselessness of education, the corruption of grades, "Escapers." William likes his students, more than he likes most of his colleagues; the trouble is he is unsure how close he should get to them. Taking one or two of the coeds on dates, he feels a vague inhibition, a guilt: the start of a professional conscience. He does not touch them; they stare at him. Once he asks Miss Armfelt, but she tells him dates are a fake ritual, part of the heterosexual conformity she repudiates. For safety's sake, then, William redirects his emotional ambitions: he has an affair with a graduate girl, also teaching freshmen composition. Strangely, it seems that some diminution of sexual attractiveness is an entry qualification for graduate school. Miss Daubernethy is not like the coeds; she is tough and fairly charmless, a dark girl with a mole on her cheek, whom he meets, in the basement of the dormitory, while observing one night the whirl of his socks and undershorts as they spin behind the thick bubble of glass, and to whom he makes, all unwittingly, an obscene suggestion; for he asks, as they stand drinking coke together, on the wet floor in the windowless room, smelling of washing powder and drying clothes, whether she could possibly sew a button on his shirt. "Christ", says Miss Daubernethy, staring at him in anger, "I'm not a homemaker. I'm a graduate student. I'm not a woman, pal. I'm a person." "Of course, right", says William.

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"I really believe in all that. I wasn't trying to role-type you, honestly. I'd have asked anybody." "Oh, sure. Anybody who's historically supposed to be seen around with a needle", says the girl. "Like a woman. Come on, how come you picked on me?" William is aghast with his own guilt, glimpsing the darkness of his unconscious chauvinism. "Oh God", he says, "I'm sorry." It can, of course, only have one consequence; it is not very long after this—in fact later that night—that, person to person, with William abased, they are making love on the metal bunk bed in his room, while Ting goes ping below.

The winter outside the office window gets colder, and all is not well. Miss Daubernethy, who comes from Florida, is shrill, tastes of Listerine, and not quite William's ideal type, the sort of person he would have picked in the free and open market. He knows, and fears she does, that she is a surrogate for the fancy, fresh, forbidden bodies in his classes, for the flashing legs and mobile nipples under sweaters, such as Miss Armfelt's sweater, that he finds himself staring at as he stands over the sink in the Chemistry Building, and talks about the use and significance of tenses. Miss Daubernethy is thirty, tight around the jaw, and has cramps because of the tension of her Ph.D. orals. She wears long dresses to hide her legs, and has exhibitionistic tastes in lovemaking, liking to pleasure herself, by seeing herself or doing things to herself, which is spiriting at first but somehow basically uncooperative, and not very easy in her or William's dormitory room, or in the back of her Willy jeep. She has an overhung bottom, stout thighs; and there are more moles round her waist. There is an old myth in these matters to which William has subscribed: that American women have outrun the world in establishing an intense level of sensation for themselves in sex. William, having had too much of the over-domesticated British variety, feels that this should have its potential for him, its high compensations. Yet, with Miss Daubernethy, as the weeks go by, it seems not to. He touches and rubs and kisses, they move and wriggle and sweat, but the challenging athletics gradually acquire not the tone of an existential liberation, a Reichian fulfilment, but rather of a vulgarly inflated achievement, like trying to play a Beethoven quartet with ten musicians, for better sound. A certain fleshly exhaustion begins to come over William, and something more: I'm a humanist, he thinks to himself. As he sits in his office by day, writing B, and D, and F on essays, and noting at the end of them "Shows improvement", "This could be better developed", "You get to the point too quickly", he feels unease, knowing that his own beginnings, middles and ends, his paragraphing and spacing, his use of the colon, will be similarly flatly measured by Miss Daubernethy's idealised grading system. The students get very anxious about these grades: "Do you grade on the curve?" they come and ask. "Do you give As for the best work you get from us, or do you only give them for, like, *Middlemarch*?" Miss Daubernethy in the dormitory room, lying across his armchair, feet splayed apart, crotch high, raises a similar problem in standards: "You're okay, you're as good as anyone I've had, to be fair, but you're not as good as the ones I'll get." William grows haunted by these Joyces, Prousts, and Manns of sex. Back in the office, he tells the kids who come and sit in his consultation chair, "It's not an abstract best. There are rules and good habits, which I'm trying to teach you. But it's a humanist affair, the best from you, the fullest insight out of you." Back in the dormitory room, William, lying naked on top of Miss Daubernethy's desk, the sweat on his brow, and the inexorable large thighs dominant above, says: "Do you think sex can ever become personal?" "I want your back up higher and your knees more together", says Miss Daubernethy, monstrous against the light, ultimately and in all a teacher. "I want your adjectives spaced out more and your verbs more together", she is saying, in conference in her office, in the light of her snaky desk lamp, when William comes by to fetch her for a meal—for they eat too—the following night.

THE WINTER grows colder still, and all is worse. One night, in her dormitory room, while Miss Daubernethy paints her nipples with silver nail varnish in the light of the desk lamp, William, naked on her bed, finds a large sharp knife under the pillow. "What's

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this?" he asks. "You shouldn't have found that", says Miss Daubernethy, and starts to cry. William feels a little twinge of terror: "What were you going to *do*?" he asks. "I don't know, I think I must be going lesbian. I can't tell you how the shape of a man's body gets me disgusted. I hate you *there*." Then her nails come flying across the room and she is lunging for the knife. The door is locked but William turns the knob, flies out into the corridor. Happily he still holds the knife. There are long, long corridors back to his room, on the other side of the building. But William makes it in a hurry, seen only by Mr Ting, a cool person, who stands contemplatively in the passage, evincing only a modest clerkly scepticism at the sight of his nudity, his knife, his panting terror. He locks his door and leans against it, feeling for the first time not the chance and arbitrary nature, but rather the utter precious sanctity, of his male equipment. Is this the lesson? "You need to cut down your ending", Miss Daubernethy, unchanged, is saying in her office next day, as William goes in, interrupting a conference, to ask for his clothes back. The clothes turn up in the garbage can in the basement, just by the washing machine where they had first met, back there when the weather was by no means so cold. It is over, and William subsides into an extraordinary fleshly disgust, thinking over without pleasure the detailed, intimate construction of her body and sensing an ultimate deceit in what the flesh, with all its promises, actually contains. But it is not over, for Miss Daubernethy is omnipresent. She starts wearing sexy clothes, and appears by his side during the break in the Teaching Round Table, when they all stand in the corridor drinking cokes, saying: "It was nothing personal, William. It's not because I don't like you or anything. It was just because you're a man." "Anyone who's historically supposed to be seen around with a prick", says William. "That's chauvinism too." In the Victorian Novel seminar, on the very day he is due to read his paper on *Jane Eyre*, Miss Daubernethy comes into the class and sits beside him, though she is not enrolled for the seminar, being a medievalist. "Any comments?" asks the professor, when he has finished. "I just love your penis", whispers Miss Daubernethy. "Do we all agree about the symbolism of the blocked-up window?" asks the professor. "You can't have it", whispers William. "Narrative strategy?" says the professor. "I want it in me", whispers Miss Daubernethy. "The symbolic emasculation of Mr Rochester?" says the Professor. "With or without me attached?" whispers William. At the faculty picnic in early December she appears round the other side of a tree by the icy lakeside, holds on to his coat, and says: "Funny dark things can happen, William. I was crazy. But I'm through it now. You have to be with me again, because I think of you all the time." William looks at her, thinks of her disgust, and then of his, inspects the body with no appeal, the body which is supposed to render us everything. "I'm really sorry", says William, "But I'm really way into celibacy now. I want to try that for a bit." "No", says Miss Daubernethy, pushing him into the lake. Two deans and three fully tenured professors are needed to get him dripping out. He is taken back by a Swinburne specialist and put into his dormitory bed. In the following days his throat seizes up and, after two croaking classes, speech becomes impossible. He goes to the campus hospital and lies feverish between clean, antiseptic sheets, while beautiful whiteclad nurses inject penicillin into his bottom. Sometimes, hot, he thinks he sees Miss Daubernethy peering in through his room window, but only Fardiman comes inside, bearing *The New York Review of Books*. When he is better, it is Christmas, the festive season, and the students have gone home; happily Fardiman is there, with his old Studebaker, his family having gone east to New York City, proposing that they both take a healthy vacation. They drive south, his mind clearing under Spanish moss. They leave behind the cold and the snowfalls. On Christmas Day he sits on the porch of a motel in the sunlight, watching pelicans, farcical birds, ungainly and unadapted, revelling in their own absurdity.

AFTER CHRISTMAS, with only a little more of the semester still to go, the snow piles up on the window sill of William's office, from which the screens have gone, and there is a curious change of atmosphere in his classes. He has been, with his little English radicalism, and his fancy talk about

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fictions, a popular teacher, but now someone steals his nameplate from the door of the office, and the students come in to complain about the grades he has been giving them. There is a politics about grades, but it is a curious politics. There is the problem of the draftees, which would have been simple (William has been putting brackets, and commas, in for them, right through the course), were there not also, subjunctively, the problem of the girls, and the problem of the footballers, and the problem of the blacks, and the problem of the fraternity boys. "What did she mean when she said she'd do anything to get an A?" asks William, as a girl who has plagiarised an essay, having submitted for him a copied-out article from *Reader's Digest*, entitled "One of Nature's Wonders: The Mighty Bee", leaves his consultancy chair, and departs angrily from the office. "She means *anything*", says Fardiman. "She'll use what she's got, and what she's got isn't in her head." "I thought that's what she meant", says William. "I wonder whether you could take a moment or two to talk to me about a few of my themes", says Mr Krutch, coming in; Mr Krutch sits in the front row of William's class with his feet up on the teaching desk, sometimes with vaguely insulting messages—like "Limey"—written on the soles. "Sure", says William. "I wonder whether there's any rational explanation of the grades you gave" says Mr Krutch, "or whether you're just plain crazy." "I could be", says William. "Look", says Mr Krutch, "This theme was handed in by another guy to another teacher. He gave it a B, you gave it a D. How come?" "Maybe you didn't copy it out very well when you were plagiarising it", says William. "What do I have to do to get good grades from you?" asks Mr Krutch. "Stand on my head? Play the piano with my ass? I'm just a nice, ordinary guy. I'm not so different than anyone else on this campus." "From", says William. "We did different from." "Tell him goodbye, and Happy New Year", says Fardiman. An hour later the football coach is in to plead for Dubchek, who has submitted an essay called "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time", an argument so complete that it even concludes with the name Matthew Arnold. "He's not Matthew Arnold", says William, lost. Fortunately there is Miss Armfelt, who comes next, dark, intense, with no bra, a city girl. She has been getting As right through the course. "Another A", says William, handing her theme back to her with relief. "So what?" says Miss Armfelt, putting her Mexican totebag down on the desk, and putting the folded theme, with William's red A on it, inside it. "Grades are crap." "That's right", says Fardiman, leaning back. "Take Hester Prynne. She got an A, and look what happened to her." Miss Armfelt looks coolly at him. "Grades are repression", she says, "Grammar's repression. All true creativity transcends rules." "So does all true stupidity", says Fardiman. "Do we really know the difference?" asks Miss Armfelt. "I do", says Fardiman, eating apple cake. "I wondered if I could have a private word with you, Mr Honeywell", says Miss Armfelt. "Sure, I'll go to the john for a minute", says Fardiman, "Since you're already getting As." "Oh, it's not about *grades*", shouts Miss Armfelt after him. "Screw grades." When Fardiman has gone, she says: "It's just a crazy thought. We were wondering—we is myself and Laura Ann Dix, she's my roommate and she's in your section too, you know?—we thought you looked kind of bushed. We both enjoyed your classes. So, like to say thank you, we thought we'd ask if you'd stop round at our place sometime for a drink. And one thing we *won't* talk about is grades." "That's very human", says William. "Sure I'll come." "Tomorrow night around eight?" "Fine", says William. "They're even crowding round the doors of the faculty john", says Fardiman, when he comes back, "Hoping to catch us unbuttoned."

THE NEXT DAY William posts one set of his final grades on his office door and locks himself in. He can hear the students outside, reading the grades and banging on the door. He has been infinitely generous, a compromise between the system and his politics, but indignation is rife: "We know you're in there", voices shout. Towards evening he creeps out down the ill-lit hall and, his coat-collar turned up, eats a hamburger at the hamburger stand before going to Miss Armfelt's. He crosses the campus. Some black students, sitting-in in the computer block, have started a fire. Outside a dormitory, boys in red Ford Thunderbirds are shouting to girls to come away with them to the west

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coast. William reaches the tree-lined streets just off campus, with ploughed snow stacked on the sidewalk, and finds Miss Armfelt's place, a small basement entrance below a frame house. He taps on the door. "Come on in", someone shouts. Some freak music is on the record player. "Hi", says Miss Armfelt, wearing her swimsuit and sitting on an exercise bicycle in the middle of the room, pedalling busily, "I'll be through in a minute." Laura Ann Dix, whom William knows, sits on the sofa, next to a brown retriever, which growls at him. "Stay, Fidel", says Laura Ann. "Fix some beer, eh?" says Miss Armfelt, pedalling on. "There's some in the icebox." "I'll get it", says William. "Let me, you talk to Ellie", says Laura Ann. William leans against a bookcase and watches Miss Armfelt getting up real speed. You don't need exercise", he says. "I wish I had one of those exercise pogo sticks, with a pedometer on it", says Miss Armfelt. "And another one for the dog?" asks William. "Why do you need exercise?" "It's for the bodily pleasure", says Miss Armfelt. "Hey get me a cigar, will you? Right there in that box, Mr Honeywell." "William", says William, getting a cigar and slipping it between Miss Armfelt's pert lips. "How's that for symbolic action", says William. "They're illegal Havanas", says Miss Armfelt. "I guess it keeps *him* in business."

"How come we have so much light?" says Laura Ann, bringing in the cans of beer. She switches lights out and others in, leaving a paper Japanese lampshade hanging low over the end of the sofa, and a tiny intense-light desklamp on the coffee table. William picks up a matchbook and lights Miss Armfelt's cigar. "Get one", says Miss Armfelt. "She'll be through in a minute", says Laura Ann. "Come and sit on the sofa with me." William sits down. "Doesn't it drive you crazy, teaching this crazy course?" asks Laura Ann. "It wouldn't, if all the kids were as bright as you." "I look at you sometimes, standing there, and I keep thinking, what he must be thinking! But you never get mad." "I really would just once like to see you really let fly", says Ellie Armfelt. "It'll happen", says William. "But you must have such a good level of consciousness", says Laura Ann. William laughs and says: "I'm a stranger. Maybe what sounds commonplace to you doesn't to me." "Oh, but the things they tell you", says Laura Ann. "They make up things because they think you'll believe it." "He knows that", says Ellie, "I keep wanting to interrupt, but I say to myself, he knows that." "I loved the way you put down that kid who was talking about dates", says Laura Ann. "What's that?" asks Ellie. "Oh, she was saying she gave a boy her right breast on the first date, and her left breast on the second date, and he said, it was funny, what happens on the third, don't you run out of breasts?" They all laugh. "We really enjoy your classes. You're the most interesting teacher I ever had." "You haven't had him," says Laura Ann. "*You* haven't had him", shouts Ellie Armfelt. Laura Ann laughs, and then pushes her face against William's. He kisses it. Miss Armfelt suddenly gets off the exercise bicycle and disappears into the kitchen space. Laura Ann surfaces out of William's arms and says: "What are you doing, Ellie?"

"I JUST HAD a great idea, let's have some tequila", shouts Ellie. Laura Ann's face pushes back into William's. "She'll be a minute, let's have a first date and a second date." William's hand goes in under her blouse and slides up over her right breast; she presses it into her and he feels the fluttering stir in his palm. "Wait", she says, and pulls off the blouse. Her brown body is under the light from the Japanese lantern, and William feels at last the waning of the physical aversion that Miss Daubernethy had left with him. His hands run up her, and then a voice says: "Me too", and there is Ellie Armfelt by him, swimsuit off, naked. William feels a splendid, relaxed sense of benison, of plurality of gifts. The record player switches over to Beethoven. Now Laura Ann is out of her skirt and her hands are on his body, pushing aside his shirt. Ellie Armfelt is working on the trousers. "I thought", says William, "you were lesbian." Miss Armfelt leans over Laura Ann and William and hugs them together, kissing both their faces. Laura Ann is pulling his body round to reach it with her mouth. Ellie Armfelt puts a breast against his face. William can hardly see, but he knows there is another girl in the room. The impression is so lazy that it almost drifts past him. But there she is, near the bicycle, holding up a square black box. "Who's that?" asks William. "That's our other room-mate," whispers Ellie. "She's in

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your class too." The flashbulb goes off, leaving a glaring residue of light in William's retina, showing him, vividly, the breasts against his face, like the breasts of the fat girl he saw on the grass in the electric storm. She was graceless; he has an instinct of the gracelessness of these bodies too, but the shudder is coming up him. There is another flash of light, and another, and another. The girl with the camera comes nearer for a moment. She says, politely, "Why, hi, Mr Honeywell", and then she goes away.

THERE IS AN ENVELOPE, almost expected, lying under the door of William's office when he gets there early the next morning. He has slept well in his dormitory bedroom, post-coitally tired, and then, waking up towards dawn, has thought of this, getting up soon after the light came to come over and check. But they have been up early too. He carries the envelope, with his name on it, the handwriting recognisable from themes, to his desk. He opens it up and takes out the single Polaroid print, with its whirl of bodies and its central, naked Honeywell, and then the sheet of folded theme-paper, with its long message. It says:

Dear William,

This is to thank you for last night. Oh boy are you a swinger. It really was a good scene. Take a look at the photo. Isn't it great? It was taken by a friend, Delise Roche, who shares our pad too. I guess you saw her when she stopped by. She's a really keen photographer, and a friend. Please remember. This is all part of the fun we have had, and a wonderful way of us all remembering it for all time. It was a swell evening, and I know I will always want to remember it. I hope you will come around again, "for a drink", I mean it, you're really welcome. Next time we ought to make it a foursome. I mean, you really ought to meet Delise. She's a really good friend of Laura Ann and I. You will know her, she's in your Comp. class too, a different section than us. A great kid with a problem. Her problem is that she has been working really hard "for the cause", active in Civil Rights, anti-war, Women's lib, etc. and has just not made the grades. Like me, she thinks grades are crap, though I guess her parents would kill her or something if she flunked out of college. Anyway we need her around, on the political front, etc. A great girl. Photography's her bag right now. She says a photograph is truer than words, and I guess she's right. It's typical of her that she takes these photographs of us just for fun, and for keepsake. Not to do anything with them. Show them to anyone, I mean. What grade are you giving her in Comp, William? Hey, you have a great body, William. See you maybe?

Yours with affection, really,
Ellie.

William sits at the desk. He scratches at a body bite and reads the letter through carefully, twice more, trying to penetrate it. It is a crisp and beautiful morning, and through the window he can see the sun bringing out red glitter on the new snow that has dusted the campus, in the small hours after he got back to his room. An innocent morning. The fire seems out now in the computing complex. He stares at the photograph, with its sticky surface and falsified colours, at the image of himself from outside, alienating, gross, yet retrieving the doings already hazy now in his head. There is a footstep out in the hallway. A key turns in the lock. "I already opened it", shouts William. "My", says Fardiman, coming inside in red earmuffs, "And I thought I was early." "I couldn't sleep", says William. "I've got some more grades to turn in", says Fardiman, hanging up his coat. "I've been reading themes all night. I'm so tired. I start to think the way they do. In unattached subordinate clauses. Like this."

"Can you bear to read one more?" asks William. "Only for a real friend," says Fardiman, sitting down at the desk and taking off the earmuffs. William throws the photograph and the letter on to the stack of papers on his desk. "Look at the photograph first," he says. Fardiman looks, and whistles. "You should make the sex magazines with this one", he says. "I like it, but I'd question whether you can count it in your list of publications." "It was taken by a student", says William. "Well, I like the way the guy has got this bicycle wheel in the foreground, to give perspective." "Now the letter", says William, "Read it carefully, for tone." "For tone, heh?" says Fardiman, automatically picking up the red pen from his desk, and making marks as he goes through the document. When he has finished he says: "Well, William, I think it's got a lot of tone. I told you if you taught these kids properly they'd learn to write relevant prose." "You did", says William. "What do you think it means?" "Well", says Fardiman, "We could have a graduate seminar on this one. Indeed it's better than *Moll Flanders*. If read at the level of innocence, she likes you, William. She's a sentimental girl, given to reminiscence. If read for irony, with the methods of the New Criticism, hunting for paradox and ambiguity, I'd say she's got you. It's a rhetorical technique called blackmail."

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"How do we determine which?" "I have a feeling it's one of those occasions where the intrinsic approach fails us. Where we turn to contextual factors, like are there more photographs." "I think she took four", says William. "Of course, they may not all have come out", says Fardiman, "but that would affect my reading of the text." "Yes", says William. "Fardiman, am I in a bad position?" Fardiman looks at the photograph: "It looks quite a good position", he says. "With the university", says William. "Oh, with the university", says Fardiman. "That depends what you want to do, in the future. These are permissive times." "This permissive?" asks William. "What *are* your career plans?" asks Fardiman. "I'd like to stay on here a couple of years, and get my Master's, and then take a university post if there are any around then. Here, or in England. I've been thinking about it a lot. I like teaching." "William", says Fardiman, looking at Honeywell in despair, "why pick a future like that at a time like this?" "No?" asks William. "No", says Fardiman.

WILLIAM SITS for a minute, and thinks. The sun is coming up over the snow, and the early students are going to eight o'clock class. He says: "You really think if she sent these photographs to anyone, I'd be in difficulties." "There's still a professional code, especially for guys without tenure", says Fardiman. "If she sends them to our Department Chairman, I'd think your chances of a renewal next year, or a good reference on your placement file, sort of low. Like around zero. If she really papers the town, and sends them to the Regents and the President, it might be wise to have a booking on the next flight home. On the other hand, if she keeps them in her purse, and looks at them occasionally, with a fond smile for the teacher she once had, then you'll have a sweetness following you for the rest of your days." "I suppose I could, at a pinch, argue that I'm human like everyone else", says William. "What kind of an excuse is that?" asks Fardiman. "The plea of the rogue throughout the ages." "It could happen to any of us", says William. "I didn't really do anything. It was all done to me. And it happens all over, Fardiman." "I know", says Fardiman, "but you got caught." "I could tell the whole story." "Then all four of you would get fired. You could run away and make blue movies together." William sits and stares at his desk, at the list of grades he has given. He inspects the list: Delise Roche has a D. Not even an F. Just a D. "Fardiman", he says, "how will it end?" Fardiman looks sadly at him. "I'm sorry, William", he says, "you have to write your own ending." "Do you think", says William tentatively, "I should raise Miss Roche's grade? We raised grades for the draftees, for the blacks. She's been working for them." "I would never advise it under any circumstances", says Fardiman, "but my mother, that old fiend, my mother would raise Miss Roche's grade." "I'd never do it at home", says William. "You'd never do *that* at home, would you?" asks Fardiman, tapping the photograph, "I guess we all do things away from home we wouldn't do at home. And since most of us are never at home we're always doing things we would never do." "Fardiman", says William, "if I do it, and keep my job, I wouldn't feel fit to keep the job I was keeping." "I said you were a well set-up, morally earnest fellow", says Fardiman, "and they always get screwed. Of course, we could be screwing ourselves."

William looks at Fardiman, wondering. "We're complex people", says Fardiman. "That's our training. We're always reading for necessity, design, structure, plot." "It's quite a plot", says William. "But are we missing innocence? Maybe it's contingent, not necessary, as Kermode would say. Maybe this letter's a pristine, guileless thing, all this while. A statement of modern love." "Can it be?" asks William. Fardiman gets up from his desk and goes to his jar of apple cake. "We find it hard to believe. I mean, what's personal now? In bed my wife is a political agent, a minor functionary for the woman revolution. My kids rip off cookies from the refrigerator and call it an anti-capitalist gesture. But people *do* do loving things." "But how do we find out?" "Well, how do we? Do we really know about ourselves? You could go and see her." "These grades go into the office at nine", says William. "Then they go in the computer, unless it's all burned up." "There's always another computer", says Fardiman. "I'm sorry, William, I don't think you can know. Here we are: we've read Leavis and Kermode, and *Tel Quel* and Marcuse. We're lost souls on the historical turn. But,

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we say, we know how to read. Then here's a text, offering two worlds, one glowing with fleshy promiscuities, one tainted with the harsh corruption of interest, okay, radical interest, and what happens? We can offer multiple interpretations. We can see it psycho-linguistically and socio-linguistically. We can find the apocalyptic figure and the low mimetic type. We can note its thematic constituents, like Delise, photography, politics, grades. We can observe in it the post-modernist or the McLuhanite emphasis on the visual as opposed to the verbal or linear mode, right? We can read it as a Sontagian erotics. The only thing we can't say is whether she got you round there to try a bit of Sontagian erotics herself on that nice British body of yours, or to shake you down for a safe passing B for this Delise. We can't *read* it, William. Or, in a phrase, penetrate the literal level of this reality."

And so there sits William Honeywell, who came here on the Greyhound bus and stood in the courthouse square, in his high-back swivel chair, looking out at the snow. It has been the coldest night on record in this little midwestern town, with its rich folks and its poor folks, its go to church and its not go to church, two hundred miles south of the state capital, where they keep all the money and the record of accurate time. On the literal level of William's reality, it is seventeen minutes past or after eight, and his grades are due at nine. Can there be a knock on the door, Miss Armfelt come by to say that it is all for love? He sits and sits, staring at the path between Humanities and Business. Fardiman, with a red pen, marks.

THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. Fardiman goes and opens it. "Happy New Year", he says to whomever is outside. "Is Mr Honeywell there?" asks a voice. "He's gone to Chicago, Mr Krutch", says Fardiman. "The Windy City." "I have to see him about my grades", says Krutch. "Come back another day, when once more he's not here", says Fardiman. "There's someone breathing back there", says Krutch. "He's there." "No, there's no one breathing", says Fardiman. "If I let you in here, you wouldn't see anybody, but I won't. You've got to learn to take words on trust." "Oh, *sure*, Mr Fardiman", says Krutch, unconvinced. "Goodbye now", says Fardiman. William breathes; he reads, and then re-reads, the letter. He takes up the red marking pen from his desk. From under the letter he takes out the computerised mark-sheet. He runs his eye down it, finds a name and, with the pen, he makes a small alteration. Then he picks up the letter, tears it, and throws it into the wastebasket. "How about keeping the photograph?" asks Fardiman. "A sweet reminiscence. Something gained, however momentary." William reaches in his pocket and brings out a matchbook. It has the name of a motel in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 12866, on it. William stares at it, for he has never in his life been to Saratoga. Then he recalls that he picked it up in Miss Armfelt's basement apartment, to light her cigar. He strikes a match on the matchbook, closing the cover as instructed, and puts the little match to the photograph. It flares, with a smell of chemicals. "You must come back to New York City and meet my mother", says Fardiman, coughing in the polluted smoke.

THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. Fardiman crosses the room and opens it. "Mr Honeywell in?" asks a voice. "He's gone to Chicago", says Fardiman. "Hog butcher, stacker of wheat." "I need to talk to him right now about my grades", says the voice. "Try again some other time, Mr Krutch", says Fardiman. "There are papers rustling in there", says Krutch. "I know he's there." "It's the wind", says Fardiman. "The local mistral. I'm all alone. Okay?" "I don't know whether I believe you, Mr Fardiman." "What's truth?" asks Fardiman. "What's lies? What are fictions? Where is the literal level of reality? You just go away, huh, Mr Krutch." "Metaphysician", says Mr Krutch, and goes. William releases the papers he is holding; he reads, and reads again, the letter. He takes up the red marking pen from his desk. He goes carefully through the letter once more, making professional markings on it. He underlines the phrase "a really good friend of Laura Ann and I" and writes "error in case": he underlines the phrase "a different section than us" and writes "Not a comparative: different . . . from." On the bottom he writes: "You get to the point too slowly" and then "Two errors carrying full penalisation:

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F." From his desk drawer, he takes a clean envelope and addresses it to Miss Ellie Armfelt, at her apartment address. "Sell me a stamp, Fardiman", he says. Fardiman, marking, reaches in his back pocket and pulls out his black wallet. "Have it on me", says Fardiman; and then "Let me go down the corridor and mail it. That guy could still be waiting out there, puzzling through the metaphysics." Fardiman goes, and William sits at his desk, and looks out of the window.

THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. Fardiman steps across and opens it. "Oh, hi", he says. "Is Mr Honeywell there?" asks a voice. "He's gone to Pittsburgh", says Fardiman. "Oh, I'm sorry", says a voice. "My name's Krutch. I just wanted to tell him he's the best teacher I ever had. I really learned from his course. I didn't understand it, but it was really good, you know what I mean? It's funny, there are some teachers who just make everything seem really interesting. I mean, I'm a dull, ordinary guy. I got these terrible grades from him. I may flunk. But who cares? That's not what matters. I'll never forget being taught by him. You know?" "I'm sure he'll be really glad to have that message", says Fardiman. "I'll tell him when I see him." "You won't forget?" asks Krutch. "I mean, if a guy's great, he ought to be told, right?" "Right, Mr Krutch", says Fardiman. "Oh, and a Happy New Year", says Krutch. "And to you", says Fardiman. William reads, and then re-reads, the letter. He takes up the red marking pen from his desk. He takes up a clean sheet of paper and begins writing. "Dear Ellie", he writes,

> I can't tell you how good it was to get your letter. It was under my door first thing this morning, when I arrived, just what I needed to hear. I'd been wondering all night, with the snowstorm going on outside my window, just how you felt, you and Laura Ann. I mean, it could have been something just casual. Like *Blow Up* or something—did you see that great film? What it meant to me was a breaking down of distances, a real getting close. God, how these artificial roles, teacher and student, block our real relationships. I accept your invitation, who wouldn't? I'll be round tomorrow night (I have a paper tonight to finish for my graduate course: I wonder what grade I'll get?). Certainly I'd like to meet Delise. She's right, of course; photography is better than words, as involvement is better than analysis, life better than writing about life. And you're right too, about grades being crap? In fact that whole academic factory atmosphere is crap too. Petty research by petty minds evading everything that's real and alive. Well, you're alive, and you've taught me something. Do you know what your letter made me do? Burn my grade sheets. I guess that's the end of my contract, but who cares? What kind of life is that? I wanted to write songs anyway. Don't take too much exercise before I come. Do you know what I'm doing? I sit at my desk, in a high-back swivel chair, looking out at the snow. I have an incredible, fresh sense of reality. It's a really crisp, beautiful morning, and out through the window I can see people walking in all their peopleness, and the sun bringing out red glitter. . . .

"Hey, William, William", says Fardiman, marking, "What's all that *stuff* you're writing?"

Les Grottes de Niaux

When I went it was Saturday. Les Grottes
de Niaux are Sunday-opening. A tight
steel door, as to a bank vault, locked away
graffiti twenty thousand years (approx)
of age. But I had seen it on a carte
postale illustrée—bison speared, vague blot
of antelope. Quite fascinating? Yes,
because of something other than good art.

A Zeppelin dick in felt-tip stains the rocks.

To aid the hunt? To work off horniness?
Partly, no doubt. And partly both convey,
and partly were inspired by, mortal fright.

Peter Reading

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Eric Ashby

A Second Look at Doom

THE LATE Sir Harold Hartley was something of a prophet. Twenty-two years ago, in the first Fawley Foundation Lecture, he gave a masterly survey of trends in the development of science and industry, with predictions about where those trends might lead in the year 2000.[1] My theme, in the 21st Fawley Foundation Lecture, was to re-examine some of these trends, though I cannot offer the grand sweep and range which Hartley offered his audience.

But I begin by calling that very obliging witness, hindsight, to testify that even Hartley was no better at crystal gazing than the rest of us are, for it illustrates the first point in my argument. Hartley singled out the three prime factors which determine the destiny of mankind: Population, Energy, Food. He quoted predictions about all three. By the year 2000, he said, the world's population might rise to 3,500 millions. It has already exceeded that figure, and the present United Nations projection for the year 2000 (at constant fertility) is over 7,000 millions. He predicted that the world's energy consumption, extrapolated to the year 2000, would reach the equivalent of 7.5×10^9 tons of coal. Three years ago the figure had already reached the equivalent of 8.8×10^9 tons—and we have 25 years to go yet. Over cereal production Hartley made the assumption that yields in developed countries with sophisticated agriculture "may well be doubled by the year 2000." In fact yields of wheat in the United States rose from about 2,500 Kilograms per hectare (kg/ha) in 1954 to about 5,500 kg/ha in 1973, an increase of 120% in 19 years.

I cite these figures not, of course, to prove that Harold Hartley was wrong, (he was as right as anyone could have been in 1954) but to illustrate how, in these turbulent times, even the most percipient expert cannot expect to make credible, let alone accurate, numerical predictions by extrapolating trends. And (now I come to my first point) computers have made this sort of long-range forecasting not more reliable, but more dangerous; for the computer confers an impression of precision and determinism upon the assumptions fed into it, and this meretricious treatment gives the assumptions an unwarranted air of accuracy.

IT IS THIS SORT of computer-treatment which constitutes what I call the "First Look at Doom." That is why I want to have a Second Look. But let me first recall the background of the First Look. It broke on the world in the report sponsored by the Club of Rome, written by Meadows and others, called *The Limits to Growth*. The message in this report was that the economic and industrial systems of affluent countries would collapse about the year 2100 unless, before then, two conditions are fulfilled. One is that the birth rate should equal the death rate; the other is that capital investment should equal capital depreciation. Under these conditions Meadows offers mankind a chance of redemption in what he called a stabilised world model. Notice (though it is a trivial criticism) that the stabilised world model" isn't stable at all. Non-renewable resources are still relentlessly

LORD ASHBY, F.R.S., *is one of the world's leading botanists and educators, He was until recently Master of Clare College, Cambridge, and served three years as a member of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution. A former Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, he has also been a guest professor at Harvard and Cornell Universities. Among his books are "Scientist in Russia" (1947) and "African Universities and Western Tradition" (1964).*

[1] *Science & Society: the Pattern of the Future.* First Fawley Foundation Lecture, Southampton University, 1954.

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falling, and the impression of reassurance in the prediction is simply because the authors chose to cut it off at the year 2100. One cannot (as one critic put it) "assume finite resources first and then hope they will stabilise afterwards. Not even a computer can have his cake and eat it."

Press comment on the report ranged from acceptance with uncritical awe to rejection with arrogant contempt. Both these extreme attitudes are, in my view, irresponsible. Fortunately, the exercise was examined by three responsible groups (and others have examined it since)—one from the World Bank, another in the University of Sussex, and a third group in the Shell Laboratory in Holland. Their examination riddled the exercise with criticisms. Many of the assumptions fed into the computer were (wrote the Task Force of the World Bank) "not scientifically established and the use of data was often careless and casual."

I am not going to dwell on these criticisms except to give two examples to illustrate them. One of the assumed causes of collapse is the exhaustion of non-renewable resources. The data used for these were taken from a respectable source, the US Bureau of Mines. But the small print in the Bureau of Mines report warns that 80% of the reserve estimates have a confidence level of less than 65%. This enormous margin of error was ignored by Meadows and his colleagues; it was not included in the information given to the computer.

Another assumed cause of collapse is the presumed effect of pollution on human longevity. I do not know of any hard data on this; but Meadows assumes that expectation of life diminished with increasing pollution. The crude correlation between the two over the last 100 years is, if anything, precisely the reverse of this—expectation of life has gone up as pollution has, so it is alleged, got worse, The relationship fed into the computer is that pollution could increase —and would be allowed to increase in a technologically advanced country—to such a level that the average human lifetime is reduced from about 70 years to about 49 years. Of course if you give that instruction to a computer—and add the instruction that pollution could go on increasing without check—then the computer will predict a collapse of population!

Computerised simulations of this sort are very sensitive to the numerical assumptions put into the computer. If the curves are recalculated allowing for a very mild response from society to the crises they predicted, the curves change shape dramatically. Thus, the Sussex group demonstrated that an annual rate of increase of no more than 2%—spread between the discovery of new resources, recycling, and economy of use in industry—would be sufficient to prevent depletion of resources becoming a cause of the imminent collapse of the economy in the models produced by Meadows. A similar marginal annual improvement in pollution abatement, on a scale probably less than that already operating in industrialised nations, would remove even the presumptive danger of a collapse of the economy due to pollution.

These criticisms illustrate a basic technical weakness of using computer simulations for exponential functions. A very small shift in the assumptions made for the inputs will totally change the social implications of the outputs. But this is just a technical weakness. Far more serious is the omission of a parameter essential for any consideration of these grave problems; namely, the mechanism of social and political response to environmental change. The most striking and distinctive feature of all communities of organisms, from Amoeba to Man, is their homeostatic response and capacity for adaptation. To make simulations of environmental change which omit this parameter is to invalidate the whole operation, for they disregard the forces of public opinion and politics. Sir Harold Hartley's speculations, made without benefit of computer 21 years ago, read more convincingly—despite their numerical inaccuracies—and are more sensitive to political and economic parameters than these ostentatious auguries of the Club of Rome.

AND SO WHAT I HAVE CALLED the First Look at Doom has been discredited and its message stifled; which is a misfortune, for to stifle the message is as dangerous for our society as to swallow it uncritically. The prognosis may be wrong but the malady remains.

It would help, for a start, to get this dilemma of man into perspective. Many of these 20th-century Cassandras seem to be horrified, outraged, at the prospect that *Homo sapiens* may lose his place in the hierarchy of nature. As a biologist I see no guaranteed tenure for man on earth. In the long run, it would be an evolutionary anomaly if *Homo sapiens* were not to go the way of pterodactyls. In the much shorter run there is

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even less reason why Western Technological Man should survive more than a millennium or so. It would be a historical anomaly if our present economic and social system were not to go the way of the cultures of Mayans and Minoans. The rise and fall of cultures has been well documented; and the first book on my reading list for a Second Look at Doom would not be by Ehrlich or Forrester, or Meadows: it would be by Edward Gibbon, published almost exactly 200 years ago.

It is from this perspective of Western Technological Man that we now have to try to make a diagnosis. Are we in a crisis or in a climacteric? It is important to have a view on this. A crisis is a temporary malfunction of society: temporary sacrifices, temporary hardship, technological fixes, some violence, perhaps even war or revolution: and the crisis is over. Society emerges into a fresh phase of stability; with some changes, of course, but with the ancient self-confidence of man as lord of nature restored. If, however, we are approaching a climacteric, these expedients will not work. Our whole strategy for dealing with the dilemma has to be different.

My own hypothesis—it is only a "gut opinion", for I cannot support it with irrefutable arguments —is that we are not just in a crisis: we are approaching a climacteric. Not only up to 1985, or to the year 2000, shall we be anxious about supplies of food and raw materials to sustain consumption, and about the equitable distribution of energy and the disposal of wastes, and about the unbridgeable gap between standards of living in affluent nations and what we now call the Fourth World. Nuclear war may bring these anxieties to an end in the Northern Hemisphere; but short of that, these spectres will brood over mankind for the rest of his time on earth. I said I could not argue this opinion, but I can illustrate it. It is trite, now, to repeat that all sorts of things—population, consumption of many resources, discharge of some pollutants, publication of scientific papers—have been increasing exponentially. The estimated doubling time for world population was 140 years from 1800–1900; 85 years from 1900–1960; and it is 34 years between now and the end of this century. Scientific journals have been doubling in quantity even more quickly; about every 15 years. It is common knowledge, too, that none of these trends will continue indefinitely. The curves become *S*-shaped. For some of these trends the turning-point in the *S*-shaped curve has already been reached.

At this turning point something very significant occurs. While the curve is exponential there is positive feedback: 2 in due course becomes 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128 . . . until astronomical figures would be reached if they went on that way, whether the figures represent bacteria, or people, or kilowatts of energy, or television sets purchased, or tons of fertiliser. But once the curve turns over, a negative feedback operates. Every increase tends to create resistance to further increase. If natural causes like starvation are depressing population, the more mouths there are to feed, the higher the death rate. If supplies of some non-renewable resource, like oil, become more difficult to get, the price goes up, and the higher the price, the greater the resistance to further consumption.

All this is familiar. But there is one less familiar effect of the turnover on the *S*-curve. It provokes political and even ethical responses from society. Deeply embedded social attitudes are reversed. In the mid-19th century the rapid growth of Britain's population was a source of pride, quoted with approval by London politicians. Forty years ago Neville Chamberlain, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, introduced the budget in Parliament with the words: "I must say I look upon the continual diminution of the birth rate in this country with considerable apprehension." But by 1973 a Population Panel reported cautiously to Parliament that "almost all the advantages seem to lie in slower rather than faster population growth."

THERE IS A SIMILAR sign of social negative feedback over energy. It is only a few years since the electricity and gas industries were advertising vigorously to promote the consumption of energy. Today we see advertisements which would have seemed crazy a generation ago: the energy industry urging people to use *less* of its products. The other striking evidence of what one might call negative social feedback is in the public response to environmental hazards. In the heyday of *laissez-faire* it would have been inconceivable to decide, as the Americans have done, *not* to manufacture supersonic passenger aircraft, or to resist the siting of power stations so successfully as to produce a temporary energy famine, or to oppose an oil pipeline from Alaska so vigorously that, but for the Arabs, there might not have been one built at all. Even in the field of pure science, public opinion is showing signs of negative social feedback. We had the fascinating spectacle in the last year or two of a moratorium,

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in America and Britain, on some very exciting kinds of research in bacterial genetics on the ground that it might have deleterious consequences to society. That would have been inconceivable 50 years ago. In brief, the turning point of *S*-shaped curves is accompanied by value changes in society. For generations it has been taken for granted that all that *can* be done, in science and technology, *must* be done. The new ethic emerging at the turn of the *S*-curve is that somehow man must agree *not* to do all he is capable of doing.

THIS, THEN, IS my scenario for revisiting Doomsday. It might be a climacteric, irreversible; and it might—no one knows—foreshadow what Oswald Spengler sensationally described as The Decline of the West. At any rate it would be no bad thing to reflect on strategies consistent with this assumption.

In confronting us with this possibility the First Look at Doom was a much needed and healthy shock, and we should be grateful for it. But I believe that the First Doom watchers got their priorities wrong. They exhorted us to forestall disaster due to *material* collapse: exhaustion of non-renewable resources, death through starvation, or through the toxic action of pollution. This has focused attention on what I would regard as second-order priorities. The imminent danger, in my view, is not collapse of affluent societies due to material famines or excesses—it is a creeping palsy due to failure of political and social innovation.

To predict (even without tarting up the predictions by computer) alternative priorities to those of the First Doom watchers is, of course, to invite the criticism that they are just as likely to be wrong as any other priorities. Of course they are. When one studies the past or the present one's conclusions can be tested against hard fact. However difficult it may be to discover truth, truth does exist as the ultimate validation for one's conclusions. When one studies the future there is no such ultimate validation, because the truth about the conclusions does not yet exist. Indeed it is one of the aims of futurologists not just to describe what future truth may be, but to change it by means of their own predictions. The rhetoric of extrapolation is dangerous. So if I now, very tentatively, substitute one doom-scenario for another, it is not to attempt to persuade that this is what will happen, it is to invite reflection on how Western man should respond if it does happen this way.

THE ALTERNATIVE PRIORITIES arise from the criticism I have already mentioned: that the First Look at Doom (as I have defined it) disregards the homeostatic response of society to changes in the environment. In a word, it omits politics.

Take the problem of non-renewable resources. Meadows and his colleagues publish data which predict how long known reserves of certain resources will last. Critics of Meadows assure us that intensity of exploration is a function of need, and as the resources diminish, new deposits will be discovered; or lower-grade ores exploited; or recycling will become economic; or substitutes will be found. Indeed this response to foreseen shortages is going on all the time, and it is to some extent monitored by the price mechanism. But this conventional economic response to impending shortages is inadequate to deal with the problems of the climacteric, for the impending problems are not technological or economic; they are geo-political.

One has only to glance (*Table I*) at the locations where the chief reserves of some minerals, essential for Western technology, are to be found, to see my point. It will emphasise the novelty of this problem if I remind you that in the early 19th century Britain was the foremost world producer of lead, copper, tin, and iron. In the span of years from 1820–40 Britain produced 45% of the world's copper.

Of course, utilisation of resources will not continue to rise exponentially; of course, fresh reserves are likely to be found as the need for them stimulates exploration. But the overall message from this table is surely self-evident. Until the industrialised nations find alternative sources or substitutes for all these resources, they remain dependent for some essential supplies on nations which are underdeveloped, or which are not notoriously friendly to the West. Long before reserves are physically exhausted they are likely to become politically inaccessible except on terms to be dictated by the producing country. We are, therefore, in for a succession of geo-political confrontations. OPEC is the forerunner,[2] the

[2] Well, not quite the forerunner, for the British established a similar cartel over rubber from Ceylon and Malaya in the 1920s, raising prices as sensationally as OPEC did in 1973.

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technique is catching on. Chile, Zambia, Zaire, and Peru between them account for 70% of copper exports to the non-Communist world. They banded together in 1967 to form CIPEC (*Conseil Intergovernmental des Pays Exportateurs de Cuivre*). This has already had some influence on the copper market, and it precipitated a minor crisis in 1973. In 1971 the Chilean government under Allende nationalised the El Teniente copper mine, which belonged to the American Kennecott Company. The Company was not content with the compensation, and it sought Court rulings to put an embargo on copper shipments from the mine until adequate compensation had been paid. This rallied cohesion—hitherto weak—in the CIPEC countries, which declared in January 1973 that "they would not replace copper on the world market where Chilean copper was seized as a result of court action." And there was another similar declaration by CIPEC when Rhodesia closed the frontier with Zambia in February 1973. Bauxite producers are combining in a similar way. They met (significantly in Belgrade) in 1973 and have now established the IBA (International Bauxite Association): and Jamaica, whose bauxite is the most convenient for America, raised its price sevenfold in 1974. Another ominous move has been the decision of Morocco, which is by far the most important source of phosphate (it produces some 20 million tons a year) to push up its price by 300%, with (of course) very serious effects on the cost of fertilisers, and so of food.

From the standpoint of the countries which own these non-renewable resources, this policy toward consumer countries makes sense. Oil, for instance, may be a better investment left in the ground than exchanged for money which is rapidly losing its value. Also oil left in the ground

Table I

RESOURCE	*DURATION* (YEARS)*	*SITES OF RESERVES†*	*PRIME PRODUCERS†*	*% REQUIREMENTS WHICH USA IMPORTS*
Aluminium	31	Australia (33) Guinea (20) Jamaica (10)	Jamaica (19) Surinam (12)	100
Chromium	95	S. Africa (75)	USSR (30) Turkey (10)	100
Cobalt	60	Congo (31) Zambia (16)	Congo (51)	over 90
Manganese	46	S. Africa (38) USSR (25)	USSR (34) Brazil (13) S. Africa (13)	over 90
Mercury	13	Spain (30) Italy (21)	Spain (22) Italy (21) USSR (18)	over 33
Nickel	53	Cuba (25) USSR (14) New Cal. (22)	Canada (42) New Cal. (28) USSR (16)	over 50
Platinum etc.	47	S. Africa (47) USSR (47)	USSR (59)	100
Tin	15	Thailand (33) Malaysia (14)	Malaysia (41) Bolivia (16) Thailand (13)	100
Tungsten	28	China (73)	China (25) USSR (19) E. Asia	75(?)

*No. of years the known global resources would last at present exponential annual rate of utilisation.
†Figures in brackets are percentages of totals.
(Data from Meadows et al.: *The Limits to Growth*, p. 56 ff., combined with data from Mesavovic and Pestel: *Mankind at the Turning Point*, p. 24)

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has a political value which is lost once the oil is exported. It is clear from Table II that, literally at the turn of a tap the oil-surplus countries could gravely disturb the economy of industrial oil-importing countries.

Table II

The Oil Equation in 1980 (Non-Communist world)
Figures in million tonnes oil equivalent.

Supply	Surplus countries*	880
	Other countries	2350—2440
	Shale oil etc.	25
	Crash coal programme	90
	Total	3345—3435
Demand	At trend rate	3960
	With consumption economies	3350—3550
Balance	Without economies	−525 to −615
	With economies	−5 to −115
Required growth of oil supply from surplus countries (% p.a.)		
	Without economies	6.0—6.8
	With economies	nil to 1.5

*Libya, Kuwait, Qatar, Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia. Data from *The Politics of Scarcity*, by P. Connelly and R. Perlman (Oxford University Press 1975), p. 41.

And we have not yet begun to see the effects which quite simple cooperation between countries owning different raw materials could exert on countries which depend upon imports of these raw materials. OPEC, for instance, might cooperate with CIPEC to buy up copper reserves with revenue from oil. The attitude of OPEC at the time of the recent Washington Conference, when they demanded that joint discussions with consumer countries should cover *all* raw materials, might indicate the beginning of a new logic of geo-politics, based on an alliance among nations which own resources, directed against nations which need the resources.

THE SHORT-TERM RESPONSE to this situation is to search for substitutes and for fresh reserves, to recycle where possible, to economise where possible; and all this is being done. This will buy time, but it is not likely to solve the problem. Short of an atavistic return to colonial conquest we face the prospect that the balance of power will shift from the nations which *use* raw materials to the nations which *possess* raw materials. We can for a time trade our know-how for their oil and ore. But only for a time; our exports of universities and polytechnics will sooner or later make them self-sufficient. What then?

We have to reconcile ourselves to a new balance of power, and it will need consummate diplomatic skill to achieve this. A few months ago I was sent on a mission by the British government to Saudi Arabia to discuss the development of higher education there. I came back from that visit feeling that Britain's strategy for research and development in the oil industry should not be to become independent of the Arabs, but to work out a partnership with them; and to do the same with other non-industrial nations which possess raw materials or food which industrial nations need. Of course this is what our exporting industries are trying to do. The prerequisite for this is to study in depth these alien cultures: their languages, their religions, their social values. Anyone who has worked in what used to be called underdeveloped countries knows how the euphoria of political independence soon evaporated, to be followed by frustrations and resentment when they realised that political independence, without economic sovereignty over their own resources, was worthless. This frustration has created a common ideology among those Third World countries which have raw materials which the industrial countries need. It is—and this is the crux of the matter—an ideology which over-rides rational economic considerations. They now have a political weapon they can use against countries which, in their view, have for so long exploited them. Even if it is, in our view, against their long-term interests, they may nevertheless use this weapon.[3] The imminent problem over raw materials is how to deal with a dogma which is widespread among an alignment of Third World countries and which may harden into an economically aggressive alliance.

The West's universities and polytechnics have much to contribute to the study of this problem. I suggest that one important—I would call it essential—educational response to the threatened shortages of non-renewable resources is to provide, for industry and government service, men who can establish a rapport with those countries which are likely to become the capitalists of the 21st century, a rapport based not just on trading for their cobalt or tin or phosphate or oil, but on a sympathetic understanding of

[3] I find myself, as I think about these issues, coming back again and again to a comment made by John Henry Newman: "Deductions [he wrote] have no power of persuasion. . . . Many a man will live and die upon a dogma. No man will be a martyr for a conclusion."

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their style of life. It will not be easy for us in Europe and America to reconcile ourselves to dependence upon nations we regard as less sophisticated; but if we deny some degree of dependence, instead of adapting to it, we may find ourselves drifting into the classical solution to this dilemma: War. Even Dr Kissinger hinted as much a few months ago. Long before the collapse simulated in the First Look at Doom begins to operate, these are possibilities which I suggest may occur; we would do well to anticipate them.

SO MY OWN TOP PRIORITY in the Second Look at Doom is to tackle the geo-political consequences of the distribution of non-renewable resources; and of food, too. For there is a grave mismatch between the distribution of food and of population, which tempts the world's food-producing countries to play a similar game. Brazil tried to make a corner on coffee in 1927; and wheat from America and Australia has recently gone up in price relatively as much as oil from Arabia. Moreover, we have to remind ourselves constantly that industrialised agriculture is dependent upon energy from fossil fuels. Only about 1.3% of the solar energy falling on a cornfield is converted into corn. For every three units of energy (expressed as calories of food value) we get from an acre of corn, one unit of energy put into the growing of the corn has come not from the sun but from the burning of fossil fuel, to make the fertiliser, to drive the tractor, to dry and transport the harvest.

My other priority in a Second Look at Doom is the ominous instability of man-made ecosystems. They have none of the built-in counterweights of natural ecosystems, and there seems to be no acceptable way to incorporate stability. Let me explain what I mean. In the evolution of natural ecosystems the survival values of complexity and of stability have run side by side. Systems which became complex without stabilising mechanisms to match their complexity simply didn't survive. The notion that the "balance of nature" is delicately poised and easily upset is nonsense. Nature is extraordinarily tough and resistant, interlaced with checks and balances, with an astonishing capacity for recovering from disturbances in its equilibrium. You have only to look at a garden neglected for 5 years to see an example of this.

Man-made systems, by contrast, have evolved in complexity without a corresponding evolution of stability. Consider how vulnerable a modern city is. A major power failure in New York, such as occurred a few years ago, paralysed the lives of millions of people. Lifts in skyscrapers stuck, central heating systems failed, transport was in chaos. There does not even have to be a mechanical fault to cause disruption. It needs only a prolonged strike among dustmen, or sewage workers, or technicians at the power plant, to cripple the great cities of the Western world. A handful of men can put at risk the whole fragile organism. A city united against a common external enemy—as London was in the Blitz—can display heroic powers of adaptation. But a city menaced by its own ecological deficiencies would have no such resilience. It would much more easily succumb to despair.

IT IS WORTH PAUSING for a moment to ask how man-made ecosystems have got into this state, and what possible remedies there are. It is a comparatively recent dilemma. In former days the services on which a city depends were not centralised; they were diffused in small units. Each dwelling had its candles and oil lamps, its cesspool and sometimes its well to supply water; all very primitive and uncomfortable—no one in his senses would care to revert to that state of affairs—but progress in comfort and convenience has been at the cost of self-sufficiency. More and more centralised services have replaced it; they are wonderfully complex, and for much of the time wonderfully efficient, but they have no built-in antidote to failure.

There is a similar weakness too, about the human element in the services which are the life-blood of a big city. A city ecosystem is a fantastically intricate symbiosis. The citizens are as interdependent as a colony of ants or bees. Of course this is a spurious comparison; for we are not, as ants and bees are, engaged compulsively in some stereotyped task, like building and tending the hive. We have the precious, if embarrassing, gift of free will; but, again, we have paid a price for this free will. The ants and bees are genetically coded to cooperate in their civic duties; they have no option but to cooperate. We are not genetically coded for symbiosis; in democratic societies our man-made symbiotic systems depend on consent. If equilibrium is disturbed, the compensatory forces to restore equilibrium may fail to operate.

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We are witnessing symptoms of that today: the erosion of loyalty to the firm or the institution, challenges to the legitimacy of authority and law, the wild-cat strike, the sit-in, violence on the picket line, football hooligans. These are consequential effects of one basic change in human communities: that people no longer identify themselves with the communities which support them and they do not realise that this may be the recipe for social suicide. In natural systems the border between symbiosis (which confers mutual benefit) and parasitism (which threatens mutual destruction) is well guarded by powerful homeostatic mechanisms. In systems influenced or designed by man it is not so well guarded. While the human ecosystems remain small, and not intricately interdependent, they may preserve their equilibrium. Or equilibrium may be preserved under despotisms such as feudalism or colonialism, where the despot imposes upon the human community something akin to the genetic coding imposed on a colony of ants. But Western democracies no longer conform to these conditions. They are hypertrophied—by which I mean that growth has outstripped regulation of the growth process. They are interdependent to a degree they cannot comprehend, let alone control. And they reject despotism as a remedy for their malaise.

To be sure, a great deal is being thought and written about this issue, and its relevance to my theme is this. If we do experience a shift in the balance of economic power between nations which own resources and nations which need these resources to keep their economies going, one sure consequence would be an increase in tension in the social systems on both sides. The Third World peoples are likely to become restless and acquisitive because of their new power. (For example, only last September Libya annexed an area in Northern Chad, because uranium ores have been located there.) The industrialised peoples are likely to experience a reversal of all their assumptions about rising consumption and material living standards, and this in turn would exacerbate disaffection and distrust within society. So, once more, the high priority is not only to devise technological fixes to counteract possible shortfalls in energy and minerals; it is also to devise social and political adaptations to the shortfalls if and when they occur. We need, in other words, contingency plans to manage unprecedented social tensions.

The tempting way to resolve these tensions is by autocracy and force. If you could shoot, or put in gaol, or even sack and starve, dissident citizens (and of course there are nations where you can do all of these) the symbiotic stability of human ecosystems could be maintained—after a fashion. In fact we used some of these techniques to stabilise our own society in the 1840s; but the social conscience has evolved a long way since then. Our dilemma is that the Welfare State, which is a by-product of the Consumer Society, has despite its enormous benefits undoubtedly weakened the stability of symbiosis in human communities. But to respond by going back to autocracy, dictatorship, totalitarianism, would be a shameful atavism.

Let me draw together the threads of my argument. The First Look at Doom alerted us to the important, if trite, fact that the levelling out of all sorts of processes in society, from population-growth to consumption-growth, is likely to have profound and possibly alarming effects on social values. My theme is that this warning is sufficiently plausible to be taken seriously, but that the common prognosis about what the effects will be is not plausible; and the danger, therefore, is that the First Doom watchers have been emphasising the wrong priorities for policy-makers. If we are headed for social decay it will not be brought upon us directly by the factors emphasised by Meadows and his colleagues. It will be due either to unresolved international tensions between nations which own raw materials and nations which need them, or to unresolved tensions *within* the nation, between sections of society which repudiate their interdependence and will not accept the discipline essential for social cohesion. I believe that the formula for survival is not power; it is symbiosis. I don't believe we can devise fail-safe systems; what we have to devise are systems which will not foreclose options even if they do fail.

The relevance of my theme is this. Great efforts are being made, and rightly so, to evolve a policy to conserve energy and to promote alternative supplies of fuel. Great efforts are being made—and successfully—to abate pollution. Similar efforts will doubtless soon be made to conserve and recycle certain raw materials (such as lead and mercury) for which there are no satisfactory substitutes, and for

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which the use of low-grade ores would probably be impracticable. Efforts are being made, too, to restrain the growth of population. My argument is that preoccupation with these measures may divert attention from more imminent and greater dangers. It is a matter of priorities. The Second Look at Doom directs attention to two other problems.

1. How will the industrialised "top-dog" nations reconcile themselves to a new dependence upon nations which own raw materials, from oil and bauxite to cocoa and tea? It will be a painful inversion of suzerainty. If it is mismanaged, there may be disaster. Reduced to the categories of academic research, this is a massive problem in geopolitics. Is it being studied intensively enough?

2. How will those nations which declare that they belong to the Free World, and which practise Western democracy and repudiate dictatorship, build into their human ecosystems—their cities, and huge multinational corporations, and clumsy governmental machinery—*gyroscopes*; to stabilise their interdependence, to confer a stability commensurate with the complexity of their social structure? In natural ecosystems these stabilisers are genetically coded. They are the products of millennia of evolution, where forces to confer stability have kept pace with complexity. In man-made ecosystems this has not happened; the knife-edge instability of great cities exemplifies the danger. Reduced to the categories of academic research, this is a massive problem in social psychology and political science.

WHAT ARE THE practical consequences of these views I have been putting? They are that these two imminent dangers need to be tackled by international efforts as massive as those used to make the atomic bomb or to put a man on the Moon. Compared with the problems we now face, those other two problems were simple, for although they required for their solution a lot of expertise they did not require mass consensus from the public. The problems posed by a Second Look at Doom require not only great expertise but also a consensus among millions. So they need not only multidisciplinary teams of research workers—a sort of geopolitical Los Alamos—they need also a stupendous Western programme of adult education to awaken people to what may be coming.

If my reflections have a message, it is this. Geopolitics, social psychology, social anthropology, political science (despite its name): these are still regarded as second-class citizens in the hierarchy of the sciences. But if my thesis is correct these are the disciplines which will help us to understand, and to influence even if we cannot control, the destiny of Industrial Man.

A Revelation

He sat on the rock writing.
It was cool there, birch-trees had grown up around it.
It was his confession and justification.
He grew lost in abstract thought, he closed his diary.

When he opened it again he found a leaf
Pressed like a bookmark at his son's name.
He knew whose hand had plucked it from the trees.
Forests of coal had gone to its making.
Dulled, it was the greenest leaf in the forest.
He stroked it as he had stroked her wrist.

If he could capture the joy that was shaking him
As the wind rocked the trees!
His hand was so quavery he laughed out loud
Sending the birds startled and flying.
"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth."

D. M. Thomas

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Kenneth Hudson

The Last Chink in their Armour

The Metaphors of British Prime Ministers from Lloyd George to Harold Wilson

EDWARD HEATH, one of his biographers tells us, "protects his personality and his inner thoughts by two types of defence. One is the deep moat of silence. The other is the high wall of trite and stereotyped phrases."[1] There are those who feel the moat is not worth bridging and the wall not worth climbing. The man inside would be no more interesting than the man outside. Here, they say, is the ultimate, totally formed *homo politicus*, a person with no private life to conceal, a Lenin. The clichés are the man, his blood and bones as well as his skin, so why bother to look below the surface?

To this there are two answers. The first is that Heath, unlike Lenin, does have a number of strong interests outside politics. Music, food and drink, and sailing are three of them. And the second is that one does not develop a defence mechanism unless one feels there is something to defend. In Heath's case, that something appears to be partly political and professional—he has no wish to provide his opponents with potential ammunition—and partly entirely personal—he is understandably weary of accusations that he is cold and unmarriageable and prefers to keep his warmth, expansiveness and spontaneous remarks in reserve, for the small circle of friends who can be trusted to understand and appreciate his version of these qualities.

The what-are-you-really-like-Prime-Minister question was developed by Leslie Smith, in a broadcast interview in September 1969.

Smith You give the impression externally of being very tough, often pugnacious, yet some of your contemporaries in university days seem to remember you as a very gentle person and they wonder whether perhaps this toughness is as real as you may want it to seem.

Heath I can assure you that I never go around putting on toughness. I don't think that people who do difficult things, and carry through policies which are sometimes controversial because they believe them to be right, are the people who go round saying, "Look how tough I am".

Smith You seem to be quite passionate, but you very, very rarely show any signs of sentiment. Is this because you think it shouldn't enter politics?

Heath It's certainly not because I don't believe in sentiment, but I'm strongly opposed to being sentimental.

Smith Are you sentimental yourself in any respect?

Heath From time to time, yes. But when one's talking about public life or politics, then I distrust people who try to achieve their ends by being sentimental. On the other hand, sentiment in the sense of deep feeling about various things, life isn't really anything without that. Feeling for the country, or for the sea and the cliffs. I have a deep attachment to my own personal things. I loathe parting with books, or a picture, or a piece of glass.[2]

On another occasion, Edward Heath has denied that it is essential to be emotional if one is to be recognised as a good leader. The emotions, he believes, "are things that warp judgment, and it is judgment which people want in a leader. That doesn't mean that I haven't got passionate personal interests and that there aren't other spheres in which you can have emotion."[3] This may well be true, although one

[1] Andrew Roth, *Heath and the Heathmen* (1972), p. 2.
[2] *The Listener*, 18 September, 1969.
[3] *The Listener*, 26 June, 1969 (interview with Robin Day).

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could be forgiven, perhaps, for thinking that it is no bad thing for a leader to have the ability to provide people with hope and encouragement in difficult times.

BUT SUPPOSE, DESPITE A POLITICIAN'S unceasing efforts to keep his private thoughts and feelings, his inner kingdom, always under lock and key, there should happen to be one small hole left through which we could continue to peer inside and see him without his public clothes on? Suppose this Peeping Tom's spy-glass were the Great Man's choice of metaphor, and that by examining and classifying his metaphors we could identify the areas of life which were really important to him, the areas to which he turned instinctively for support when he needed to win an audience over to his way of thinking and feeling?

To approach a man through his metaphors is a technique pioneered many years ago by the Shakespearean scholar, Caroline Spurgeon. Shakespeare left very slender clues to his upbringing, career, and private life; and Dr Spurgeon's method, developed long before the days of the computer and the grotesque excesses of sexual psychology, consisted of a careful classification of all the metaphors of the plays and the poems, so that one might be in a position to make intelligent guesses at certain features of the poet's life which would otherwise have remained hidden.

The present study of recent British Prime Ministers applies similar methods of investigation to a body of people whose private lives and thoughts have been a matter of much greater public curiosity than Shakespeare ever needed to defend himself against. What kind of wall an Elizabethan would have constructed around himself in order to protect himself against the probings of journalists and interviewers, had such inquisitiveness existed 350 years ago, is difficult to say. But it is possible to suggest that Dr Spurgeon, digging into Shakespeare, had a considerably easier task than someone digging into Ted Heath or Harold Wilson, mainly because the great majority of Shakespeare's metaphors are alive, whereas a modern politician—Churchill was the great exception—will almost certainly offer at least a dozen utterly worn-out metaphors for every one that still has flavour and vitality.

There is a further practical problem. Prime Ministers, unlike poets and Irish story-tellers, frequently employ other people to write their books, articles and speeches for them. Some, like Sir Anthony Eden, delivered speeches exactly as their ghosts had written them. Others—Baldwin, Bonar Law, Heath—worked over other people's drafts, so that the final version contained a good deal of themselves. Others again—MacDonald, Attlee, Wilson, Lloyd George, Churchill—relied on civil servants to provide briefing material, but preferred to compose their speeches themselves, often moving from draft to draft and taking several days over the polishing and revision. In such instances, how much of the speech or the article came straight from the Prime Minister himself is often difficult to decide, and there is little point in either collecting or analysing the metaphors of his speech-writers, brilliant parrots as they sometimes are.

To play safe, it is best to confine one's quarrying to extempore utterances—press conferences, radio or television interviews, discussions—or to material produced before the great man became Prime Minister. Backbench Members are rarely rich enough to employ speech-writers, although one or two—Eden is the outstanding example—acquired the habit remarkably early in their Parliamentary career. Despite all possible caution, however, it is impossible to be absolutely sure that a "characteristic" phrase or a sentence has not been suggested by someone else. Baldwin's celebrated slaughter of the Beaverbrook and Rothermere press—"what the proprietorship of these papers is aiming at is power, and power without responsibility, the prerogative of the harlot through the ages"—turns out to have been inspired by his cousin, Rudyard Kipling.

FEW MEN, INSIDE OR OUTSIDE POLITICS, have ever shown such a passion for metaphor as David Lloyd George. His whole career, it might be said, was one vast metaphor. Yet, in his speaking, the images were, individually, of relatively small importance. It was the cumulative effect of what he was saying which caught the imagination of those who were listening to him, and for this reason a Lloyd George metaphor can often continue for a hundred words or more. Here is such a parable from his address to the Eisteddfod in August 1917:

> "I have been in the habit once or twice of telling my fellow-countrymen, when there was anything that made them feel in the least depressed, to look upon the phenomenon of their hills. On a clear day

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they look as if they were near. You could reach them in an easy march—you could climb the highest of them in an hour. That is wrong—you could not. Then comes a cloudy day, and the mists fall upon them, and you say: 'There are no hills. They have vanished.' Again you are wrong. The optimist is wrong; the hills are not as near as he thought. The pessimist is still more wrong, because they are there. All you have to do is to keep on. Keep on. Falter not. We have many dangerous marshes to cross; we will cross them. We have steep and stony paths to climb; we will climb them. Our footprints may be stained with blood, but we will reach the heights, and beyond them we shall see the rich valleys and plains of the new world which we have sacrificed so much to attain."

Nobody could read a dozen pages of Lloyd George's speeches without being aware of the part that the scenery and the climate of Wales played in his mental world. There is a never-ending cyclorama of mountains, clouds, storms, rivers, darkness and light, the indispensable background of the old Welsh preaching on which Lloyd George modelled his style. All this belongs to the on-stage part of his life. It tells us little about the man the public was not permitted to see, unless one chooses to believe—and it is not unreasonable—that these elemental-forces-of-nature images present a form of sexual exhibitionism, a permitted opportunity to reveal the woman-longing, woman-conquering man that lay hidden inside the statesman's shell. Much more significant, perhaps, and curiously ignored by his biographers, are the metaphors of violence, the images drawn from the struggles of wild animals and from the battlefields where human beings destroy one another. His second wife, in her autobiography, has noted Lloyd George's obsession with battlefields.

> "His great interest on visiting any country [she recalls] was to go to whatever battlefield presented itself, of whatever epoch, and reconstruct the fight."[4]

It is a curious fact, however, that his interest in fighting invariably finds an outlet in metaphors which focus on the brutality and bestiality of war, rather than on its technical refinements. The enemy is seen as a wolf or a tiger, and the task of the Allies was "to tear the captured land free from the bloodstained claws." German submarines were "the wolves that prowled through the jungles of the deep", a merchant ship sailing to Britain was "in the predicament of a swimmer in a shark-infested sea", Romania had to be "rescued from the wolves that were tearing at her entrails", Belgium could well "go plumb down the maw of another country", the Suez Canal was "the jugular vein of the Empire", and France, "rent deeply by the cruel claws of war", was "bleeding from every vein, still on her feet facing the foe, but staggering." In Russia, "the Revolution was crouching just round the corner, and, as soon as the delegates left, it leapt up with a furious spring", and in Ireland it was necessary to "cut the claws of the Sinn Fein movement." Even British farmers were animals lurking inside a human skin. When, under the conditions of war, they were ordered to plough up grassland, "the grumbling became a growl and at last a smile with bared teeth."

[4] Frances Lloyd George, *The Years That Are Past* (1967), p. 159.

Ethnological Insult

ETHNOLOGICAL INSULT: *Mr Wilson finds that Mr Prentice used "an offensive phrase" when he said of the social contract that the unions must not welsh on it. In delivering this second public rebuke to a colleague, the Prime Minister has bowled something of a chinaman to those Wilsonologists who amuse themselves by puzzling over his motives. He seems to have committed an Irishism in coming to the aid of the Principality (as he did in the Commons last Thursday) when the body under attack was the unions; and to let fly at Mr Prentice the day after Mr Healey had charged the unions' friends with "irresponsible lunacy", and got off scot-free for it, is to reduce Cabinet discipline to the level of Russian roulette. It would be putting on the English, as the Americans used to say, to pretend that a Prime Minister is never irritated at his Cabinet subordinates; but it is certainly a new manifestation of the English sickness that he should express his irritation so openly and so often.*

The explanation must be that Mr Wilson wants Mr Prentice to go—not just to take the kind of French leave which a Commons Select Committee has indulgently permitted Mr Stonehouse, but actually to resign in a huff. Mr Wilson might care to remind himself that this notion of a minister's being unsackable except by roundabout methods would have been Greek to his predecessor, Mr Attlee. If the Prime Minister's nerve is not to be braced by that recollection, or even by a covert access of Dutch courage, he would do better to nurse his pro-Cymric sensitivities in silence. In national terms, the real danger of his attitude is this: if persisted in, it will cause a steady impoverishment of our language—a decline contagious as German measles, deadly as Asian flu. Since Mr Wilson conducts his quarrels in public, the rest of us may claim the same freedom in full measure; and we cannot exercise it if we allow him to jew us out of our rich inheritance in ethnological insult.

SUNDAY TIMES

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GIVEN LLOYD GEORGE'S BACKGROUND of Welsh folklore, it is possible that the pouncing, hostile, tearing creature that was so real and ever-present to him was a dragon, rather than a wolf. Whatever it was, the weapons were claws and teeth, not guns. Combat, in his imagination, was always a one-to-one affair, in which a young warrior, "stripped bare for the fight", faced up bravely to a monster or prepared to "thrust his spear under the fifth rib of Austria." It took some time to bring these young warriors into fighting condition. On the outbreak of war, "John Bull was getting soft, flabby and indolent. He was just slouching along. Then the war came and now his tissues are as firm as ever."

There is no evidence that Lloyd George himself ever displayed any particular physical prowess or fondness for violence, either as a boy or a young man, or later in his life. The fights-to-the-death of his dream-world have all the appearance of a compensation for the person he never was. The violence of his metaphors is by no means confined to fighting, however. To waver in one's determination to win the war was "to put our heads into a noose with the rope end in the hands of Germany." Serbia had "dared to assassinate a future Emperor and deserved to be scourged. But it was too paltry a task for him to attend to the details of the lashing." A thoroughgoing conscription policy had to reckon up "the number of young men of military age who were fit to be thrown into the furnace to feed the flames of war."

It may be true that, considering his political career as a whole, Lloyd George, in the words of his brother,

> "spoke from the primitive emotions of the crowd, drawing his images from the elemental forces of nature and the incidents of common life, rarely travelling outside the experience of his audience."[5]

The secret of his popular appeal may have been his willingness to allow these primitive emotions to rise to the surface in the form of metaphors and parables. But not all his emotions and interests are primitive. Machines fascinated him—he enjoyed working with his hands, and envied the skilled workmen who were able to earn a living that way—and a considerable proportion of his images are drawn from the field of machinery. "There are people," he said in 1917, "who think the nation is like a petrol machine, that it can only be driven by a series of petty explosions, and unless they always hear it spluttering, they think the machine is at a standstill. . . ."

LLOYD GEORGE, more than any other British Prime Minister except Churchill, is entitled to the enviable title of the man who hardly ever mixed a metaphor. One can search in vain through his speeches and books for the kind of nonsense that not infrequently fogs up the language of Wilson and Macmillan. Lloyd George does not, in the Wilson style, "try to get the mercy corridor working", "back the nuclear horse both ways", urge us to "set our sights 1 per cent above last year", or to make sure that our efforts are "properly dovetailed into the administrative machine." Nor does he tie himself up in Macmillan's engaging nonsense. He could never have been responsible for such masterpieces of metaphorical muddle as, "The Budget was to be a milestone to Conservative victory and a tombstone in the Socialist graveyard. Now at last the tide of our fortunes was to turn and flow in our favour."

Lloyd George thought in metaphors. He did not tack them on afterwards, to brighten up the effect. It is interesting, for this reason, to note those of his habits and interests which never contributed to his stock of metaphors. We know, for instance, that throughout his life he admired and repeatedly re-read *Paradise Lost*, Burns, Macaulay, and Dickens. Yet his own speaking and writing contained no echoes from them. He was celebrated for his sensuality, but the human body provided exceedingly few of his metaphors. Domesticity meant a great deal to him, but, apart from one or two cat-images, there is almost nothing in his choice of metaphors to suggest it. Hearth and home, like Dickens and the female body, do not seem to have rivalled violence and battles in his fantasies. The conscious part of his world could absorb them and deal with them satisfactorily. Sex was peripheral to him; violence was not.[6]

WHAT, THEN, WAS THE FANTASY WORLD of that other great trader in metaphor, Winston Churchill, a man "universally admired, but little liked",[7] who had, unlike Lloyd George,

[5] Thomas Jones, *Lloyd George* (1965), p. 265.
[6] "To Dafydd life was a battle and he was never happy unless he had somebody or something to fight." William George, *My Brother and I* (1958), p. 280.
[7] *Chips: The Diary of Sir Henry Cannon* (1967), p. 327.

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a remarkable ability to impress his audiences but a much smaller talent for moving them. His life has been explored with some thoroughness,[8] although as yet not with the degree of objectivity and possibly irreverence which would allow adequate attention to be given to the less pleasing sides of his nature. The person emerging from these studies is a man yearning for praise and approval for his every action, suffering from long fits of depression, aggressive, unable to tolerate criticism of any kind and placing a high value on achieving comfort for himself at all times. Gluttonous, hard-drinking, with a skin so soft and delicate that he could wear only silk next to it, working at hours which suited him and nobody else, a romantic demagogue who understood very little of the way ordinary people lived, this extraordinary creature is overripe for careful psychological investigation. What made him like this? What kind of boy turned into this kind of man?

The basic facts are known. Of small stature and undistinguished physique, he was neglected by his rich parents, and sent to a major (but not the leading) public school where he made little impression either as a scholar or as an athlete; he joined the Army in South Africa and India, rather than a university in England, and developed a love of military affairs and an admiration for soldiers which remained with him all his life. Battles had a childish fascination for him. "I love the bangs", he once said during a World War II air-raid, with complete honesty and apparently with total unawareness that many of his fellow citizens did not share his feelings; and on another occasion he referred to a couple of bullets as "two soft kisses sucked in the air." Language he loved—the English language. He confessed to enjoying "the feel of words fitting and falling into their places, like pennies in the slot." The mouthings of foreigners deserved only ridicule and contempt—and he took great pains to avoid sloppy phrases and constructions himself and to criticise them in others.[9] The art of conversation was strange to him and he preferred monologues. Extempore speeches came under the heading of sloppiness. Every speech he ever made was worked over again and again until every word was to his satisfaction. He never (or hardly ever) gave interviews or press conferences.

What, if his metaphors are any guide, does the subconscious world of this boy in a man's body seem to have contained? A pattern is not easy to find, because the images are so abundant and because, in his anxiety to enliven his speeches at every point—he was essentially a rhetorician—Churchill went for colour wherever he could find it. He has the usual politician's store-cupboard of words, well-stocked with storms, tides, dams, dawns, darkness and light, slippery slopes, Bible quotes and marching; but his great skill in putting sentences together often allows him to turn clichés into something a little more distinguished. "Safety will be the sturdy child of terror and survival the twin brother of annihilation" has very little meaning, but a great deal of polish.

DIGGING INTO THE GREAT MOUNTAIN of metaphors, putting the one-offs temporarily aside as curios and sorting the rest into batches and groups with similar characteristics, the Churchillian fantasy world gradually becomes more apparent. It is a violent world inhabited by armed warriors, who are searching, sword in hand, for dragons and monsters in human shape to destroy. Sometimes, but not always, there is a fair maiden to rescue in the process. Single combat is the rule, blood flows generously, virtue always triumphs and the hero eventually receives the reward of his courage. The individuals and the countries he despises are often presented, in communist fashion, as jackals and dogs ("This whipped jackal, Mussolini, comes frisking up at the sides of the German tiger"); but only Britain and her Empire are worthy of the lion symbol ("And now the old lion, with her lion cubs at her side, stands alone against hunters who are armed with deadly weapons and impelled by desperate and destructive rage").

This is surely how Churchill saw the world and his role in it. It was the compensation for his inadequacies as a child, and possibly also for the very low key of his sexual life. To say that he was a natural war-leader is to state the obvious. Peace uncovered his weaknesses and turned him

[8] Notably by A. J. P. Taylor and others in *Churchill: Four Faces and the Man* (1969), and by Brian Gardner, *Churchill in His Time* (1968). Two of the contributions, by Anthony Storr ("The Man") and Robert Rhodes James ("The Politician"), are especially valuable.

[9] "He projected a style and polish to the business of governing, maintaining a fastidious dislike of officialese and jargon of all kinds . . . . I marvelled at his extraordinary application. Nothing was too much trouble. Every sentence was written and rewritten; every quotation was checked; every phrase weighed in the balance." Harold Macmillan, *Tides of Fortune* (1969), p. 375.

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into an inadequate schoolboy again, a sulky, disgruntled, unappealing schoolboy, throwing his carefully rehearsed bulldog expression against the world,[10] waiting for the next wave of armed champions to rush out on to the plain and break the intolerable monotony. For him, the significant times were those "when nations are fighting for life, and everyone from prince to groom is fighting on the battlements."

There are, even so, one or two significant minor groups among Churchill's metaphors—machines, food and drink, and swimming. Nature, in the form of plants, trees, flowers, domestic animals, appears hardly at all. There is no farming, no home life, and, strangely for a man whose main relaxations were bricklaying and painting, no building and almost no art. Painting, as Dr Anthony Storr has pointed out, became an important outlet for his aggression. It was as important to him as words, as a way of relieving the darkness of the depression into which he felt himself descending. In one remarkable passage[11] Churchill refers to putting

> "slashes of blue on the absolutely cowering canvas. Anyone could see that it could not hit back. No evil fate avenged the jaunty violence. The canvas grinned in helplessness before me. The spell was broken. The sickly inhibitions rolled away. I seized the largest brush and fell upon my victim with berserk fury. I have never felt in awe of a canvas since."

THERE ARE VIRTUALLY NO Churchill sport images of any kind, and in this respect he is very different from Harold Macmillan—whose game metaphors have been poured out in cheerful abundance for the whole of his life. There are boxing metaphors ("He was an agile antagonist and made rings round Bevan"); chess metaphors ("When one piece is moved in the delicate design of an administration, corresponding reactions follow, down to the humblest pawn"); and racing metaphors by the hundred ("Here was our great hero, the winning horse that we had bred and trained in our stable; and when the great day came it refused to run at all"; "So we have got over this particular fence. The water-jump [the Suez Canal] is yet to come").

Cricket is much favoured. Concerning a series of negotiations in New York, for example, he tells us, "It was slow batting, not as good as a run a minute, but very safe play. Stumps were drawn at about 5 p.m." Fishing is important to him ("Mr Khrushchev has taken the bait, but avoided the hook"); rabbiting and cock-fighting are not ignored ("In vain was the snare laid"; "This Cock would not fight much longer"); hunting metaphors are frequent ("With the Afro-Asian pack in full cry, led on by the United States and Soviet Russia as joint masters"); and so are those drawn from boxing and fencing ("Four armchairs for the protagonists, in the middle of the room, with all the seconds, trainers, etc., ranged behind"; "He had been so long accustomed to thrust that he had forgotten how to parry").

Mr Macmillan does not seem to have enjoyed swimming a great deal. Toe-testing-the-water metaphors are numerous ("The Socialists, like cautious bathers, have just put a timorous toe into the water, and promptly withdrawn it"). But puzzles and conjuring obviously fascinated him. "These," he tells us, "were the balls which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, like a Cinquevalli, was expected to keep in the air together"; and one particular game, which he played in his youth, recurs again and again. In connection with Cyprus, for instance:

> "The whole thing reminded me of one of those irritating puzzles that we had as children, when it was impossible to get all the balls into their respective holes at the same time. One could perhaps get in the Turks and the Greeks, but immediately Archbishop Makarios would suddenly pop out."

Army life appears less in Macmillan's metaphors than one might have guessed, and when it does it is usually in a gentle form ("The final relief of the political sentries was preceded by nearly two years' manoeuvring"). Food and drink, on the other hand, are very important to him ("Cyprus goes on and off, like a dish in a cheap restaurant"; "The world, starved of dollars and replete with sterling . . ."). One of his best continued metaphors, drawn from drink, is to be found in the maiden speech he made to the House of Commons in 1925.

> "If he thinks [said Macmillan of Ramsay Macdonald] that he and his party have only to offer us as the true socialism a kind of mixture, a sort of horrible political cocktail, consisting partly of the exploded economic views of Karl Marx, mixed up with a little flavour of Cobdenism, well-iced by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, and with a little ginger from the Member from the Gorbals—if he

[10] "The nose of the bulldog has been slanted backwards, so that he can breathe without letting go."

[11] W. S. Churchill, *The Roar of the Lion* (1969), p. 162.

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thinks this is to be the draught given to our parched throats and that we are ready to accept it, he is very much mistaken."

Sexual metaphors are found more frequently in the writings and speeches of Harold Macmillan than in those of any other British Prime Minister of the last half century. A Minister is referred to as "becoming impotent in the Department"; it was sad to observe "the second rape of Czechoslovakia", and "necessary to protect the virginity of Marxist Russia." Marriage and babies are included in the mix. "I observed," he records, "that although the proposed British marriage with Skybolt was not exactly a shotgun wedding, the virginity of the lady must now be regarded as doubtful"; and he had watched with interest "the feeling of intimate and almost loving care which every Chancellor bestows upon his yearly child." And on another occasion he emphasises that "the degree of inflation, like the housemaid's baby, was a very little one."

As he grows older, metaphors connected with bodily disorders and doctors become much more frequent. He favours them particularly for his attempts to deal with the troubles of the economy.

"One of the usual symptoms of a boom, that of unjustified wage demands, continued unchecked. For this unexpected persistence of high fever in spite of a low diet, a new term of art was later devised. . . . I seemed to get little support from the traditional forms of febrifuge—blood-letting, purging and the rest. I was therefore thrown back either on quack doctors or on an attempt, amid many other pre-occupations, to devise some new treatment by my own efforts."

And throughout his life, this very Edwardian politician resorted to the theatre and the circus for colour and liveliness. It was natural for him to see his own retirement in an actor's terms. "It has always seemed to me more artistic," he wrote, "when the curtain falls on the last performance, to accept the inevitable *E finita la commédia*. It is tempting, perhaps, but unrewarding, to hang about the greenroom after final retirement from the stage."

Harold Wilson has the reputation of being a clever phrase-man, using epigrams and figures of speech to annoy and demolish his opponents. Some of his bon-mots have gone down, if not into history, at least into the anthologies and store-cupboards from which history is written. Sentences like "I could not understand how any man could have a slipped disc whom Providence had failed to provide with a backbone" represent Wilson at his sharp best; but on more than one occasion his over-bright metaphors have got him into serious trouble. Loyalty to the leader and the Party is one thing, but there were, as it turned out, certain dangers in comparing the dissenters to dogs. "Every dog," he declared, waiting carefully for the applause, "is allowed one bite, but if biting becomes too much of a habit, its owner tends to have doubts about renewing the licence when it comes up." The thought was not popular and explanations were subsequently required. The really effective metaphor, even in politics, should not require a softening translation.

The well-cultivated public image of gentle, kindly Harold Wilson, the poor butcher, unable to bring himself to sack even the most grossly inefficient of ministers, may need a little revision, if one large group of his metaphors is any guide. "He comes," said Wilson in a characteristically friendly way of a Conservative opponent, "and carves off another hunk of flesh from the Welfare State and throws it to the wolves to buy time for a few months." These gentle methods are not peculiar to the Tories. Even Wilson's colleagues enjoy a little skilful cutting and chopping from time to time. "Roy Jenkins," we are told, "tore him apart, calmly and clinically." Sometimes the dismemberment and disembowelling take place under proper hospital conditions: "It was a clean, antiseptic operation, from which Mr Barber had barely recovered a year later." Even George Brown, having "sweated blood with Donnelly", becomes less cuddly and clubbable than one had been led to believe.

Sporting metaphors are abundantly on hand, however, to provide some sort of antidote to the violence. We have "the Chancellor, who played the bowling with a very straight bat"; and history which "was full of top-rank centre-forwards relegated to the reserves for failing to stop a shot at goal for fear of missing." Wilson has always loved cricketing metaphors and often develops them at great length.

"The Government have been enjoying for the past three years a batsman's wicket and now the batsman's wicket is crumbling a bit. The Chancellor's own reputation as batsman is due far more to the wicket than to his ability in using the bat. Indeed, now that the Chancellor is discarding it during this period, by dismantling controls and deciding to throw away his bat altogether and rely on his pads,

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> I would remind him of the fate of the five English batsmen, in the fate of the first innings in the Test Match which ended today."

Wilson can handle cricket and football, the people's games, but he is liable to get a bit confused when he ventures into the pastimes of the élite.

> "I loved the debates. It was real rapier stuff, and sometimes I landed up flat on my back, sometimes him."

Swordsmen and fencers, unlike boxers and wrestlers, are not in the habit of knocking their opponents flat on their back.

Dancing, too, shows him uncertain of his facts. "Too much effort", he believed, "was going into the delicate footwork, through Brussels and WEU, which constituted what I called the European quadrille, when the dance-hall proprietor had already made it clear that there was going to be no dance." Quadrilles, one has to remind Mr Wilson, were performed in elegant ballrooms, not in dance-halls. His passion for democracy sometimes plays tricks with his imagery, and now and again one is bound to wonder if he really thinks about the meaning of words at all. Nixon, to him, was "a man who had been through the political treadmill"—convicts were put on a treadmill, not through it, which would have been painful—and if he had indeed "had experience of what the grass-roots could do to Mr Smith", Mr Smith surely deserves our sympathy, because all that roots can do to people is to grow in them.

HAROLD WILSON'S ARCH-OPPONENT, Edward Heath, has never bubbled over with metaphors in this or any other way. There are, in fact, only two categories of Heath metaphors, and it takes a long time to collect a dozen examples of either. The first is concerned, not unexpectedly, with boats and sailing, and is possibly the equivalent of Wilson's cricket and football, a Prime Minister as his P.R. man would like the nation to see him. This Edward Heath believes in "a form of government in which you don't veer violently" and sympathises with "employers who found it necessary to stand men off in order to keep themselves afloat." The other Heath is the man who proposed that "we would talk very freely, with our hair down." Hair-metaphors are extremely rarely used by other Prime Ministers. Churchill, Attlee, Douglas-Home, Eden, Macmillan and Wilson never use them. Heath, however, seems fascinated by hair. The attraction which such an image has for him may indicate both a greater measure of sexuality than he is usually credited with and a difficulty in keeping the sensual side of him perpetually repressed and away from the gaze of the prying people.

Margaret Laing has noted in her biography[12] that talking was not encouraged in the Heath home, and that one result of this was "to exaggerate an inherited tendency towards brevity of speech, and to render him inhibited, and even inarticulate when it came to discussing, or even expressing, deep personal feelings and problems. . . ." She agrees with the often-made comparison between Heath and a computer—feed him with information and wait for the print-out of the answer. The silences occur when the computer is badly programmed, and (in Heath's terms) to ask what he feels about something, or someone, is to programme him incompetently.

LORD AVON (SIR ANTHONY EDEN) shows similar characteristics. Overwhelmed by his "intensely masculine",[13] eccentric, boxing-enthusiast father, he has always taken great pains to keep his private life private. "No epigram or witticism has ever been attributed to him", says his biographer, "nor has he ever employed any memorable phrase."[14] Certainly nothing to equal Macmillan's "It rained umbrellas"—or Lloyd George's "France, with her face all wrinkled with Party lines"—or Baldwin's "I met Curzon in Downing Street, from whom I got a very chilly nod and the sort of feeling a corpse would give an undertaker."

Eden always covered his tracks with great care. His later speeches were often, perhaps usually, ghost-written, but he is believed to have composed his maiden House of Commons speech himself. The theme was air defence. It was dull and safe, and his speech-writers had no difficulty in recapturing the authentic tone and flavour. Yet in one place the man shows through.

> "It is a natural temptation to honourable members opposite, some of whose views on defence were fairly well known during the years of the war, to

[12] *Edward Heath: Prime Minister* (1972), p. 25.
[13] The phrase is Lord Avon's own.
[14] Randolph Churchill, *The Rise and Fall of Sir Anthony Eden* (1959), p. 17.

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adopt the attitude of that very useful animal, the terrier, and roll on their backs and wave their paws in the air with a pathetic expression."

It was a metaphor that might well have come from his sport-loving father, and a high proportion of his own metaphors are indeed drawn from riding and hunting. A question put to a prospective Member by a constituency selection committee was "the last fence which the candidate had to get over." A person responsible for a bad political blunder

"is like a bad rider who drives his spurs into a horse and the next minute jabs it in the mouth and, when the poor brute gets into a muck sweat, beats it and says, 'what a rotten horse you are', while it is really the rider who is both arrogant and inept."

The metaphor is not one which would come either easily or accurately to a left-wing representative of the urban working class.

Eden's other main metaphor groups are sensual and related mainly to smoothing, rubbing, stroking, and eating. Molotov "did what he could do to rub off some of the sharp angles", but at the end of the conference they had to admit that there were "matters that cannot be ironed out between us." Another conference met "to discuss what is very thin gruel indeed"; during the War there were "committees that fed the Defence Committee"; and in 1956 he remarked that "the Russians have brought us an actual shopping list."

Not memorable phrases, perhaps, but something a little more lively than the officialese which made up the average Eden offering to his colleagues and the public. Both in speaking and writing, he was much given to the double negative, that time-honoured screen between a politician and civil servant and the world. Randolph Churchill believed this showed "a psychological fear of the positive", and this may well be so. To use clear, direct language and strong sharp images is to commit oneself, a dangerous step for any politician to take. And to commit oneself is a mark of confidence, of a belief in what one is doing. The public figure whose language is woolly is a person whose language has to be woolly, if he is to talk at all, because he has nothing positive to say.

RAMSAY MACDONALD is an excellent illustration of this sad truth. "His style", it has been said, "deteriorated as he became entangled in political compromises."[15] The early MacDonald, steeped in the Bible and Socialist theory, passionately interested in biology and geology and wholly dedicated to the working-class cause, had a well-organised mind and a straightforward way of expressing himself. The MacDonald of the 1920s and '30s, a considerable social figure and a politician determined to hold on to power at all costs, had nothing to say and a great deal to conceal. He did both at great length. While he still held firmly to his Socialist faith, or (as his enemies preferred to put it) before he allowed himself to be corrupted, his language remained pretty well under control, although even as a young man there were signs of the chaos into which his words were later to fall. In view of subsequent developments, one cannot be entirely happy about such sentences as,

"Upon their gross materialist roots grow fine spiritual blossoms, on the solid rough foundation rise pinnacles of divine ideas stretching upward to heaven."

At every period of his life, however, MacDonald enjoyed playing with words quite as much as Lloyd George did. He drew heavily on the Bible for his imagery, his vocabulary and his rhythms ("The working-class Radicalism of the 'sixties was the salt of the earth"; "Time runs, but how empty his hands are of gathered sheaves"; "Poverty is always at his door, uncertainty sits with him in his home"). But equally important for him during the years before 1914 was his conviction that society was a biological organism, to which only Socialism could give adequate political expression. A favourite thought, repeated hundreds of times in his books and speeches, was that "the individual is primarily a cell in the organism of his Society." Within Society, "though the diseased functions atrophy, they retain a sort of parasitic life and maintain a ceremonial and social existence owing to the incapacity of the social organism to throw them off completely."

Yet he saw society in many other shapes. At one time it was "a cannibal-battle royal", and at others a river ("the swift and straight-running current of Socialism"), "a hive of busy workers", or "a machine which is always getting out of gear." As the years went on and the War destroyed his beliefs, none of these pictures—and like Lloyd George, he lived by pictures—satisfied

[15] L. MacNeil Weir, *The Tragedy of Ramsay MacDonald* (1948).

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him; and he began to superimpose one wildly on top of another, as if hoping that some kind of Identikit meaning would result. "If the people cannot construct Socialism in their minds", he wrote, "then they cannot build it into their institutions." And in his own attempt to build Socialism in his mind, he rushed in desperation from one metaphor to another, hoping each time that if harvests and weeds failed to yield the golden answer, then bugle calls and battering rams, or gardeners and pruning hooks might do so. The true tragedy of MacDonald was not that he deserted the parlours of the workers for the drawing-rooms of the rich, but that he never found the completely satisfying metaphors to explain the essence of humanity to him.

THE FIVE PRIME MINISTERS who form what might be termed the quiet group—Bonar Law, Baldwin, Neville Chamberlain, Attlee, Douglas-Home—seem to have lived relatively happily without a metaphorical core to their lives, much as some men appear to manage very well without sex or alcohol. This is not to say that they were incapable of producing or enjoying a neat turn of phrase, or that we cannot learn a good deal about them by discovering the fields from which they draw their metaphors and those which they avoid. Baldwin, for instance, with his horror of social life, his uneasiness in the company of women, his fondness for agriculture and the English countryside, very naturally concentrates on images taken from domestic life and the farmyard. He was not, he said, "on the whole disposed to conclude that the people are such a helpless, ineffective flock of sheep"; but he had watched with abhorrence the wartime politicians "leading reluctant and unsuspecting people into the shambles." He disliked and mistrusted the Labour Party, not because of its philosophy, but because it was not, in his opinion, " a comfortable household." In the Labour Party,

> "there are so many occasions when the peace of the home is rudely shattered by some of the boisterous and ecstatic children bursting into shrieks or falling into paroxysms, which are offensive to the ears of their parents and their more sedate brothers, as they are to their neighbours in the surrounding tenements."

There are no violent metaphors in Baldwin, no wolves tearing people to pieces, no stabbings, either in the back or in the front, no swords or massacres. And there are none in Sir Alec Douglas-Home either. This Prime Minister from the grouse moors confines himself to the quiet browns and greens of life. "I think", he says, "that we ought to have a good shot at it", and he has certain demands to make "if this [the Government] is to be a genuine club." Commonwealth trade preferences "have been eroded away a bit." President John F. Kennedy "bore on his shoulders all the cares and the hopes of the world", and his death was one of the "times in life when mind and heart stand still."

Bonar Law—Presbyterian, lifelong teetotaller, star of a Glasgow debating society, partner in a merchant bank—relied, for the most part, on metaphors from fishing ("The hon. member laid his baits for the applause of the gentlemen around him") and from building ("They pull down the house in order to improve the ventilation.") Lord Attlee, too, the man who punctured Churchill's oratory time and time again with terse, abrupt questions, rarely rose very much above his low-key, domestic cruising level. He was accustomed to "sitting by the bedside of dying or dead industries", observed "the Lord Privy Seal, who, with difficulty, kept his feeble infant alive from week to week", and believed that "seeing the amount of cloth available, we had to see what kind of a coat we could produce." There are very occasional Biblical echoes ("the provision for Lazarus of some crumbs from the rich man's table"); a below-average proportion of clichés ("to see everything through Russian spectacles"; "he kept close to the beating heart of the people"); and many metaphors of a homely, domestic type, with a strong emphasis on gardening. Like Anthony Eden and Harold Macmillan, who also served throughout the First World War, Clement Attlee makes little use of his military experiences as a source of metaphors. Unlike Lloyd George and Churchill, who were romantics and revelled in war, these three seemed glad to put the heroics and suffering of wartime behind them and to become the ex-officer type of civilian which existed in plenty during the 1920s and '30s.

THE LIST OF BRITISH PRIME MINISTERS contains odd people, cunning people, insensitive people and more than one eccentric; but the British breed of leader is only rarely downright sinister or seriously psychopathic. Other countries, however, have not been so fortunate, and a study of the metaphors of, say, Hitler or Nixon, made early enough in their careers, might have saved their respective countries, and the world, a great

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deal of unnecessary suffering. A literary institute concerned with the minute study of the metaphors of public men could do a lot more good than the heresy and conspiracy hunts which pass for security today. International Metaphor Intelligence is on the agenda of the day.

The Place of Being

I

It had fallen in, or been broken.
The top was in angles of slabs
That lay sideways, slightly askew.
I could see the bare earth underneath.

The metal holder for flowers
Had gone. But a small green moss
Was growing in earth in the casing.
I touched it with my thumb.

On the scatter of chips of granite
Some little plant was blooming
That might have been heather. The headstone
Was stained, darkened with soot.

II

It was cold in the wind on the hill,
But the view was quite beautiful.
New buildings rose in the mist
In the valley, towers of concrete.

Somewhere down there, live people
Went about their autumn business,
Forgetful of the dead in their graves.
As I had been, until now.

I stood for a moment with head bowed,
Wondering what to say.
But I couldn't think of anything.
And it seemed stupid to kneel.

So I lifted a sycamore leaf
From the shallow drift on your bodies,
And folded it into my pocket.
And then I walked away.

George MacBeth

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Roy Fuller

1935-75

The toothless men of Sind; a faceless lamb;
Hairless mutations in the Norway rat;
The Ishmaels and the Roosevelts; the big
Robertson strain of the Washington navel orange;
Three kinds of triplets; silver guinea-pigs;
The giant salivary chromosomes;
A year of sterilisation in Germany;
And polydactyly in swine, in humans—
Having conveyed it home, I wonder how
I could initially have baulked (through sheer
Meanness) at buying from the outside stall
The gathered issues of *The Journal of Heredity* for 1935.

For all seems poetry—and largely in
Blank verse!—and pregnant with the innocence
(As of great tribal bards) of scientists.

And all put forth when I was twenty-two
And twenty-three. The binding's been in some
Storm—more than showers on the 5p box;
Say, hoses playing over fires begun
By sterilising Germans, who in fact
Were helped appropriately from the eugenics scene
By one of the "superior" Roosevelts.

This summer of '75 I bedded out
Blossoms ringed red and white like footballers,
The end result of doings reported here,
No doubt: that is, the x-irradiation
Of relatively plain petunia stocks.

What Faustian knowledge in my youth, that could
Daunt beyond previous ideas of doom!
We saw the photographs of buttocks beaten
Perhaps by six-fingered hands; great oranges
Left to decay remote from hungry lands:
Yet watching Madame Butterfly look over
La rada, il porto, la città di Nagasaki,
Our tears were still for dirty tricks done to
A single member of the nation-state.

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Claire Glasman

The Visitor

When the visitor comes to the house
And walks in the door
He will stand for a few minutes and notice the colour of the walls and carpet.

Then he will start at the bottom of the stairs
And as he passes each landing
The curtains on the windows either side
Will be drawn and the dust sheets put on.
He will go up,
Treading the white pile.

Soon
The lights will be turned on.
The dimmer switches on the lightbulbs
Will be turned more and more
And he will go up and up,
Treading the grey pile.

The wallpaper will begin to peel;
He will stop a minute to tear off a paper rose.
He will open his wallet
And put the flower in
Next to a five-pound note.
Then he will go on, up and up,
Humming a tune,
Sucking a peppermint,
Treading the black pile.

Then
He will get to the top.
He will stop and stare at the ceiling
Where he will see a latch,
Some faint cracks and a hinge painted white.
He will hunt for the stepladder,
Then press it against the wall and climb three steps.

Then he will open the latch and climb up.
This is the attic;
He is unable to see because it is dark.
He is unable to sit because there are no chairs.
He is unable to go up because there is no way out.
He is unable to come down because I have taken the ladder away.

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Robert Strausz-Hupé

Maxims (II)

NO POLITICIAN trusts any other politician. Yet, only trust begets trust. To trust for the sake of being trusted, the politician needs to be more of a man and less of a politician. This is the politician's dilemma. One way of coping with a dilemma is to find a word for it. In politics, that word is: statesmanship. A statesman is a politician who seems to be almost a man.

IT HAS BEEN SAID that to govern is to foresee. True as this might be, it is not necessarily useful advice to the politician. If he were to act upon it he might fail to take advantage of that lucky accident that neither he nor anyone else could have foreseen. In practical politics it is impossible to distinguish between luck and foresight. The latter is the historian's attribution to dead politicians who, in their lifetime, have been unusually lucky.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT of all collectives, including those formed for altruistic ends, is: "Preserve thyself!" Only an individual can so forget himself as to put, for the sake of love, another's best interest ahead of his own.

REORGANISATION is bureaucracy's defence against reform.

MOST MEN, having been caught in a mistake, either admit or deny it. Bureaucracies do neither. They legitimise error by administering it.

THE FIRST REQUISITE of supreme rule is a robust conscience which makes for untroubled sleep. A powerful ruler can afford to share his bed with whatever it accommodates, but not with scruples.

THE WORST ABUSE of power is not to use it while one has it.

WHEN A PEOPLE has lost its zest for power, those politicians gain popularity who tell it that, by having got weaker it has become stronger. This is political therapy. It works quite well—until the next international weight-lifting contest.

IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, it is always easier to make new enemies than new friends. Therefore, nothing is more harmful to the security of a nation than inconstancy. We might do well to appease our enemies—as long as we do not buy them off at the expense of our friends. The sell-out of allies has always been a cause of war and, nearly always, of wars that the sellers have lost.

WAR IS *not* the continuation of foreign policy by other means. It is the outcome of a policy that has failed to secure allies and, hence, to deter enemies. War is the shipwreck of diplomacy.

THE MOST felicitous assumptions a nation can make about the intentions of another are those that need not be put to the test.

IN WAR, nothing is certain but the unexpected. The options are innumerable, though none is open to those who do not return from the battlefield.

IN WAR, only those plans that allow for improvisation are likely to be carried out. When hardly anything has been left of the plan and improvisation has saved the day, then everything has gone according to plan.

IN A PERMISSIVE society, it is easy to defy all taboos, except the one that negates all the others. This makes it difficult to offend social mores—and still draw attention to

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oneself. Hence, total protest equals total anonymity. Thus, the circle closes.

HEDONISM is gobbling up all the ideologies of the age. Its heroic figure is the protean consumer who refuses to die for it. Thus, hedonistic society assures its survival.

CREATIVITY is solitary. This is its gravest offence to modern society.

THE IDEOLOGIES of the last hundred years have come to grief on the realities of the present. Now, the issue of pollution rekindles the zeal of the militants-without-issue. When we have nothing else to say, we can always talk about the weather.

SOME POLITICAL systems are more humane than others. They do not excel, however, in fostering individual goodness. Indeed, the worse has been a political system, the more shining has been the goodness of the good men under its writ.

THE ALLEGORICAL image of history is a woman. Rightly so, for she forgives her heroes every conceivable misbehaviour, but not for standing her up when she has given them an appointment.

MEN WHO HAVE RISEN to great power are more likely to forgive those who stood in their way than those who are giving them a bad conscience. They could not have got to the top had they not been able to cope with their enemies; they will not bear with the moralist who tells them that it is unwholesome to enjoy the view.

THE FIRST LESSON of history we need to learn is that none of her lessons is quite consistent with any other.

MOST OF THE TIME, Western civilisation has been at war with itself. Its peoples, while they fought one another, conquered the world. They held it as long as they ruled it with good conscience. The West's doubts have engendered the certainties of its enemies. Those who are sure of the outcome can afford to watch and wait.

ALL CULTURES carry in themselves the seed of their decline. That decline begins when enough cultivated people think that the seed needs cultivating.

IN ANTIQUITY, the health of a society was thought to reside in the piety of its people who, disdaining ostentation, dedicated themselves to the defence of the City and adorned the shrines of the Gods. Modern society takes its temperature by the graphs of the Gross National Product and average standard of living. Its piety is statistics; it relies upon computers to defend the City; and its most highly remunerated thinkers decry materialism. When modern society has trouble digesting its plentiful fare, a dose of humanism, as prescribed by the doctors, relieves its discomfort. This is the Full Life.

OUR CULTURAL GAP is as wide as the distance between the head and the heart—between "I think, therefore I am", and "I feel, therefore I am." Since both axioms are circular, reason and sentiment have nothing to say to one another.

THE POINT-COUNTERPOINT in the history of all great civilisations has been political power and cultural creativity. The flowering of the latter always follows close upon the expansion of the former. When a civilisation's imperial juices no longer run, its culture dries up. Like dried fish, it keeps for a while. Then it rots, and, with any luck, the anthropologists of a succeeding civilisation will reconstruct it from its naked bones.

IN OUR SCREEN-TV civilisation, play-acting in real life has become almost universal. This is why so many people can no longer play their own roles and miss the cue to that brief walk-on that life has assigned to them in its scenario.

THE ALLEGED COMPLEXITIES of our age furnish us with the best excuse for leaving unsolved those simple problems that require simple solutions.

THE MOST NECESSARY among the superstitions of modern man is belief in rationality. Without it, he could not face the dark; with it, he can whistle in it.

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IDEOLOGIES are closed systems. Within them all is orderly. The more disorderly are the times, the greater is man's craving for certainty. Thus, ideologies rise, as smoke does from fire, from the distraught temper of the times. Ideologies do not beget revolutions; after the dissolution of the old order has become obvious, ideologies profess to reduce the obvious to order. Nowhere is the condition of man as orderly, as certain and as obvious as it is in prison.

INTELLECTUALS are prone to believe that their ideas make things happen. But events have their own way for outwitting intellectuals. No one can hate history as implacably as an intellectual spurned by history. His revenge is to cage it in a philosophical system.

A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN can never be sure that she is loved or merely prized as a possession that flatters the vanity of her suitor. Most beautiful women are intelligent enough to understand their predicament. They make the best of it by seeming to be more aloof or denser than they really are.

IN A RATIONAL WORLD there would be no place for ideologies. Unclear ideas in clear print could not lead astray so many people, if people were not more patient and pliable than paper.

A COMMUNITY of peoples exists only in so far as it does great things together.

THE LIVING SPACE of political freedom can be measured exactly: it extends to that part of the realm that is not occupied by military barracks and alms houses.

THE IDEA that knowledge is worth gaining for its own sake is a humanist idea. At this idea, both materialist and mystic cavil. This is why, in contemporary culture (and anti-culture) there is no place for the University.

THE UNIVERSITY is the community of scholars. Like all communities it can, at times, be quite unruly. As long as its quarrels rage over the ways of scholarship, they need not harm the University nor the world around it. Ever since the first stirrings of humanism, the ideas that have changed human society have issued from the University. These ideas have triggered the great contentions of our history. Whenever the University has entered these commotions or let them intrude upon the stillness of ordered thought, the community of scholars has turned itself into a rabble as thoughtless as all mobs.

HEDONISM is humanism gone to pot.

WE NEED TO FORGET a great deal in order to believe in the future.

THE GREAT PRECEPTS of ethics, once they had found wide acceptance, congealed into rote. If this had not happened, they would not be so deeply rooted in our conscience as to cause us that momentary pang when we are about to violate them.

OUR INNATE GIFTS are paired with innate flaws. Strong will tends to stubborness, high intelligence to arrogance, and originality of mind to dogmatism. Thus, some very gifted men manage to be very foolish ones. The little wisdom we possess we have gained by ridding our inborn gifts of their flawed companions.

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Column

THERE HAS NEVER been a New Year since the War in which the Western world has found itself in greater confusion and dismay than at the beginning of 1976. The reason is not hard to find. It lies in the inability, or the unwillingness, of the United States to discharge the responsibilities she has hitherto assumed as the leader of the free world, and in the knowledge that, in a Presidential election year, she is not likely to recover the will and determination which such responsibilities demand. At this moment, indeed, it seems probable that none of the possible Presidential candidates will have the calibre required to lead the United States out of the mood of baffled indecision to which she has fallen a victim. If the West is leaderless today, it is likely to remain so for some time to come, with consequences that are indeed incalculable, but on any reckoning can hardly fail to be to its disadvantage.

It would be hard to say how such a situation has come about, or to explain why the West, which only a relatively short time ago was almost over-confident in its own future, should today have begun to doubt whether it has a future at all, except within a continuously shrinking frontier, within which freedom is in permanent retreat. One would have to take into account the energy crisis, the total defeat of American intervention in Viet Nam, the world economic recession, inflation, the ambiguities of Dr Kissinger's policy of détente, Watergate, the deep conflict between the American President and the American Congress, the personal character and abilities of Mr Gerald Ford, the certainty that for the next nine months America's political energies will be monopolised by the forthcoming Presidential election; and over and above all these factors, there remains, despite détente, a profound uncertainty about the intentions of the Soviet Union, and about how far Moscow is willing to go in exploiting the opportunities created by the weakness of the West.

The possible causes of weakness indeed seem endless and certainly add up to a formidable list; and yet one might be permitted to doubt whether any single item on it, or even all of them taken together, is quite sufficient to explain the extraordinary failure of nerve by which the United States appears at present to be afflicted. Indeed, in some cases failure of nerve might seem to be, not an effect, but a cause. What is Dr Kissinger's foreign policy but a public, and voluntary, declaration that for the United States the day for great enterprises is over and that henceforward she must limit herself, in her foreign policy, to such modest objectives as are compatible with appeasement of the Soviet Union? One should not be mistaken about Dr Kissinger. His object is to contain the Soviet Union, not to surrender to it; just as it was the object of Mr Neville Chamberlain and Lord Halifax to contain National Socialist Germany. Appeasement is the form which containment takes if one believes one is negotiating from a position, not of strength, but of weakness. But Henry Kissinger should not be surprised if many people, including his own countrymen, are bewildered by the complexity of his manoeuvres.

IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, indeed, it is tempting and natural to look for explanation where it lies most immediately to hand, that is to say, in the behaviour of those statesmen and politicians who have played a leading part in shaping United States policy in recent years; in the wickedness of Mr Nixon and his weird gang of accomplices, in the deviousness of Dr Kissinger, in the ineptitude of Mr Gerald Ford. Yet in a democracy politicians can only lead where their constituents are willing, even if reluctantly, to follow, and, to an outsider at least, what seems most obvious in the United States today is that it is the American people themselves who have renounced the ambitions which they once cherished so fiercely and proudly, and have cast themselves in a more modest role, even if they do not quite understand what it is or should be. From this point of view, it is interesting that Mr Ronald Reagan's promise, in the New Hampshire primary, to stand eyeball-to-eyeball with the Soviet Union if elected President, seems to have had the effect of making even Mr Ford look like a statesman to his fellow-countrymen. Indeed, there is a sense in which one might say that in Mr Ford, with his indecisions, his hesitations, his fumblings and stumblings, they have chosen, almost by accident, yet with an unerring instinct, a President who reflects exactly their own state of mind. And if one were to ask what that state of mind is, one could hardly describe it better today than by parodying Mr Acheson's famous remark, which once caused so much indignation in Britain: "America has lost an Empire and failed to find a role."

WHAT ACCOUNTS FOR so rapid, and so profound, a change from the hopes, dreams, ambitions which inspired American policy in the post-War world, from Harry Truman to Lyndon Johnson? Is it a humble acknowledgement that, in the euphoria of victory, the United States set her

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sights too high and chose an imperial destiny which was beyond her material and psychological means? Or is it simply the logic of events, at home as well as abroad, which has forced the United States to admit that, in this century, there can be no *Pax Americana*, as there once was a *Pax Britannica*, but only a fragile and precarious truce, by which the super-powers agree to share the world, even if this means that over vast areas of it freedom is extinguished? We are far too close to events to give any definitive or even approximate answers to such questions. All we can be certain of is that what is happening now is of the most profound significance to the whole of the Western world. "It is closing time in the gardens of the West," said Cyril Connolly a long time ago. But now it is not a question of opening hours; there may soon be no gardens at all.

IT WOULD ILL BEFIT a native of these islands to derive any of the pleasures of *Schadenfreude* from America's perplexities and predicaments; though no doubt there are some who will. For certainly we have as much, or more, to lose as anyone if America fails to overcome her difficulties. And at least in the United States one has the feeling that her problems are genuine and important ones, and whether she solves or fails to solve them is of concern to everyone who is alive today. And one also has the feeling that, after all, despite all the difficulties, the ball is still in play and we have not yet seen the end of the game, and this gives a visitor a certain sense of exhilaration and excitement, even if he can hardly fail to be affected by the Americans' own sudden loss of self-confidence.

In our own country one's feeling is precisely the opposite. It is that the game is over, the jig is up, and we know the result, which is that it is no longer possible to avert or to halt the long process of decline which has by now reduced us to a condition in which our affairs are no longer, except out of courtesy or force of habit, of any conceivable interest or importance to anyone else except ourselves. One might take it as significant in this respect that no one has seriously challenged Mr Tindeman's relegation of Great Britain to the second rank of EEC members, as one of those countries like Italy which are not likely to make a positive contribution to the Community and will long remain a burden on the resources of their more advanced neighbours, like Germany and France. So blatant an affront to our *amour propre* would once have provoked a storm of indignation. Today it is so patent to all that we have fallen far behind our European partners that no one (except perhaps Mr Callaghan) would have the effrontery to deny it.

How long this process of decline will take to complete its course, or what the end result will be, no one can at present foresee. It has already taken a long time to reduce us to our present condition and it may take even longer before we are finally compelled to surrender all claim to belong among the advanced countries of the world. What is new perhaps is the widespread sense that by now the process itself is irreversible.

I make no apologies, in these circumstances, for referring once again to the special issue of ENCOUNTER, edited by Arthur Koestler, which was published almost 13 years ago under the title *Suicide of a Nation?*. There is hardly a word in its analysis of the condition of Britain then which would need to be altered today, and there is not one of its gloomy predictions of what was likely to happen in the absence of drastic reform which has not been more than fulfilled. In this sense *Suicide of a Nation?* could be published today as it stands, though, significantly enough, it would not perhaps provoke the same indignation as when it first appeared. And yet, I think, none of the contributors would write today as they did then. For them, beneath all their dark forebodings, there lay a common assumption that doom was not necessarily unavoidable, that though indeed it was already late in the day it was not as yet too late, and that a rigorous régime of self-criticism followed by energetic action would still be capable of averting Britain's decline. After all, that was the point of the whole thing.

Perhaps, even then, such a hope was childish and naive, a hangover from the days when the British people still thought of themselves as a great nation. Today we are wiser; to the gloomy, yet not wholly pessimistic forebodings of *Suicide of a Nation?* we should now have to add the fatal rider that the will to positive action was and is missing and that without it even the most accurate forecast of the future must fail to have any effect.

★

IN THE LAST YEAR we in Britain have learned a great many things about ourselves that we did not really know before, even though we had dimly suspected. We have learned that labour productivity in key industries, such as automobiles and steel, is almost laughably lower than that of foreign workers operating with strictly comparable equipment. We have learned that the State absorbs nearly 80% of personal incomes, at a time when the services provided by the State are visibly running down. We have learned that there are many things we can no longer afford which we once took for granted, like an efficient postal system or a railway network adequate to our needs. We have come to

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realise that our industrial performance makes us an object of mingled pity and contempt to other advanced countries, and that we can no longer produce enough to maintain our educational, medical, and other social services at a level which we thought we had a right to expect. And now Lord Kahn has emerged, from long years of profound meditation at King's College, Cambridge on the mysteries of the economic system, with the startlingly original conclusion that our trade unions are stupid and our managers incompetent. The general picture is that of a system from which all vital energies are continuously and inexorably leaking away, as from some mortal wound.

There is no doubt, I think, that this dark picture, reinforced by the direct effects of inflation and unemployment, has made its mark on people's minds. Their view of the world, and their own place in it, is different from what it was, say, even a year ago. Yet to this change in their view of the world, and in their expectations of the future, they react with no new determination to face the problems involved, no resurgence of energy and effort, but rather with a kind of dull apathy or stoic fortitude, as if it were now too late to do anything except wait patiently for the end, which after all, they somehow feel, is more likely to come with a whimper than a bang.

To the future historian of the rise and fall of the British Empire this spectacle of a great people, which once astonished the world by its achievements, sinking slowly and gradually into obscurity will offer a fascinating subject for study and provide endless opportunities for speculation as to causes and effects. Actually to be a part of it today is a rather more painful experience. But perhaps our future Gibbon, among the intricately interconnected influences which he will identify as contributing to the final end, will lay special emphasis on one particular factor, which is that at the moment when the British people needed most of all to concentrate their energies the very instrument which they had fashioned to express their common will suddenly, like a piece of flawed crockery, came to pieces in their hands.

By this I mean that the machinery of a government in this country has, under Mr Harold Wilson, suffered a profound transformation which no longer makes it an adequate instrument for expressing the popular will; and if there is no popular will today it is perhaps as much because it died of frustration as for any other reason. The change came upon us like a thief in the night; perhaps in the end Mr Wilson's greatest claim to lasting fame will be that he introduced the greatest constitutional innovation of the 20th century without anybody noticing.

Formally, today as for centuries, the government of Britain is based on the proposition that Parliament is sovereign. The difference is that whereas once, and up to a very short time ago, this was true both in theory and in practice, it is now only true in theory. In practice we now live under a form of dyarchy, in which the government rules, not by the consent of Parliament, but by kind permission of the trade unions. The government exists, as it were, on probation and on sufferance, and on the strict understanding that, where the national economy is concerned, it will take no action except with the prior agreement of the unions. In other matters, in which the unions are not interested, the government may, like a wayward and irresponsible child, do what it likes.

This novel system of dual power has given rise to a peculiarly complicated form of conflict between what Charles Maurras used to call *le pays légal* and *le pays réel*, and regarded as the classical form of a revolutionary situation. On the one hand, the sovereignty of Parliament has become a legal fiction, which has to be reconciled in practice with the prerogatives in economic matters of the TUC; this is what is meant by the "Social Contract." On the other hand, the trade unions themselves in no way represent the views of the great majority either of the British people or even of their own members. They represent a strictly sectional interest which has been granted a privileged position, as the Church or the landed interest once was, in the British constitution as it actually works in practice. It is no wonder that Mr Len Murray talks like an Archbishop. A third and complicating factor is that the British electoral system has by now become so absurd that Parliament presents what is at best a wholly distorted and unrepresentative reflection of British political opinion.

It may well be that in the intricacies and complexities of this machinery of government, which by now falsifies the whole of our political life in Britain, the British people will be finally throttled to death, like some animal choking for breath in impenetrable undergrowth. The death throes will no doubt be protracted; but even now they are not pleasant to contemplate.

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Adam Smith

Re-reading "The Wealth of Nations"—By WILLIAM LETWIN

ALL GREAT BOOKS are liable to be misunderstood, and *The Wealth of Nations* more than others. Confusion arises, in the first place, from an apparent ambiguity in Smith's intentions. The book opens as a treatise in pure science, and indeed it is the foundation of theoretical economics; but about midway it seems to turn into a work of advocacy, a sort of lawyer's brief in favour of capitalism, free private enterprise, *laissez-faire*, or, as Smith called it, the "System of Natural Liberty." This conjunction of science and polemic strikes the modern reader as uncomfortable, for we have fallen into the habit of believing that truth and objectivity are inevitably sacrificed when knowledge is impressed into the service of policy.

Science, we are inclined to say, tells us how things are, and scientists have no business telling us how things ought to be. This view, correct as far as it goes, does not enable us to judge the merit of statements which, though they seem to be prescriptive in form, are technical in substance. If, therefore, Smith used science as the groundwork for establishing his views about the best economic policy, this procedure does not, when properly understood, imperil the one or invalidate the other. We will however need to examine the extent to which Smith succeeded in proving the case for *laissez-faire*.

In the second place, difficulty is encountered in tracing the main lines of Smith's argument because *The Wealth of Nations* is so rich in detail and complex in texture. After working out the framework of his economic analysis, Smith spent thirty years thinking about it and ten years writing the book. During that long time he was able to gather a prodigious fund of concrete historical information with which to fill out, enliven and embellish the main lines of the argument, on to which in the meanwhile he had grafted numbers of corollaries and qualifications. The lavishness of the yield is best illustrated by a renowned passage on the value of silver, which Smith formally labelled a "Digression" and for good reason, as it goes on for 63 pages (vol. I, pp. 161–224), long enough to accommodate within itself a sub-digression on raw materials (pp. 198–219). This thick scatter of variegated detail of fact and argument tends, like camouflage, to disguise the solid shape beneath.

THE THIRD and perhaps most important reason why many misread *The Wealth of Nations* is that Smith tried hard to make the book palatable. He wished to induce busy men to read, with pleasure or at least patience, half-a-million words about an unpopular subject, all tending to an unpopular conclusion. Before they read the book, many educated men would have confessed willingly that whatever little they knew about economic affairs was more than enough. Some of them thought it a base illiberal subject, not to be studied in a university or by a gentleman. By presenting the material as though it were a cross between history and philosophy, politics and ethics, Smith persuaded contemporary readers that it was fit fare for a thoughtful man of the world and for the scholar. As to his policy proposals, Smith tried and more or less managed to soften the paradox of his conclusion that the best way to regulate a nation's economic life is not to regulate it. Given that the wares he had to offer were offensive to many potential buyers, Smith purveyed them with great tact and delicacy. The reader must look beneath the calm and mild rhetoric to find the rigour and power of Smith's view.

THE WHOLE OF *The Wealth of Nations* is a single protracted argument. Smith set out to prove that the best of all economic policies is to leave the economy to work according to its own intrinsic laws or, what is equivalent, to leave each person to respond as he will to his own natural economic incentives. He aimed to demonstrate with the utmost logical strictness that government should renounce all interference with private efforts except so far as was necessary to prevent force and fraud and to ensure national

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defence and domestic peace. The whole book is arranged as a plea for the System of Natural Liberty.

The proof proceeds in stately steps. In order to establish that the free private market gives good results, Smith showed first that it tends naturally to set the prices of goods at their proper levels (Book I), and to steer capital into the uses that are most beneficial to society (Book II). He then demonstrates that efforts of government to improve on the working of the free market are injurious, whether they aim to stimulate commerce or manufacture or agriculture (Books III and IV). Then, as Natural Liberty is not to be equated with anarchy, he explains what things government must do because they must be done in a civilised community and cannot be done reliably by private persons responding to private incentives (Book V).

The ultimate conclusion in favour of the System of Natural Liberty and the carefully designed proof that supports it are not thrust on the reader as though he had come along asking for nothing better than to be told that all his notions about economic matters were false. Being a suitable teacher, Smith knew that students are most easily led into a subject along paths that fit their own preoccupations and curiosities. He therefore started out with the question implied in the full title of the book: why are some nations richer than others, and how does a nation grow richer or poorer? After hastily specifying that he will answer in terms of annual income, he argues that a nation is rich in the degree to which (*1*) its workers and managers are skilful, and (*2*) its workers and managers are usefully employed. The skilfulness of its labour force depends on division of labour, and this topic—familiar since Plato and little likely to stir anyone's passions—serves gently to lead us into Book I, dedicated to the contentious proposition that a free competitive economy will result in prices being what they ought to be.

The division of labour, according to Smith and many others, increases the national income because it encourages specialisation, which in turn facilitates the growth of skill. In order for specialisation to be beneficial, in order that each man may sensibly accept the risk he runs in abandoning self-sufficiency, all the members of a community must be willing to exchange their specialised products for those of others. Instead of each family growing its own grain, baking its own bread and taking up arms in its own defence, there come to be farmers, bakers and soldiers, all dependent on each other and all able to rely on each other because everyone is willing to trade with the others. Division of labour, and all the benefits arising from it, becomes possible as the

> necessary, though very slow and gradual consequence of a certain propensity in human nature ... to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another. (vol. I, p. 12)

Exchange takes place because men are able to trade with each other, a power possessed (as Smith points out) by no other animal. And being able, they are also willing. Why is that? Because, being rational, a man sees that he improves his condition by giving something he does not want very much for another thing that he wants more. The motive of trade, then, is the benefit each man expects from it. Animals, foreseeing no such thing, live as self-sufficient individuals.

> But man has almost constant occasion for the help of his brethren, and it is vain for him to expect it from their benevolence alone. He will be more likely to prevail if he can interest their self-love in his favour, and show them that it is for their own advantage to do for him what he requires of them.

The finding that self-love is a more dependable motive than benevolence has always seemed to some readers to signify that Smith was a thorough cynic. Nothing could be more mistaken. When Smith says that benevolence cannot be depended on, it is his sad comment on a world which would be better if the only motive were love, or the more general quality which in his treatise on ethics,

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The Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759), he called "sympathy." It is his acceptance, reluctant yet unavoidable, that outside of family and friendship no reasonable man can *depend* on anybody else's benevolence. But he is so far from being a cynic, or even a confirmed pessimist, that he believes sheer luck, of a sort, has made it possible for men to live together on terms which insure not benevolence, but at least justice. The economic system does not treat people gently or mercifully, but it can—if not distorted by interference—give them a decent reward for their efforts. Seen as the moving cause of such a result, self-interest is not intolerable.

ECONOMIC THEORY TODAY is still firmly based on the assumption that something like self-interest is the engine that moves the economy. But it is no longer called anything quite so narrow or moralistic as "self-love." Economists today speak instead of "maximising behaviour." One standard definition of Economics calls it the science of maximising the satisfaction of given ends by the use of scarce resources.

In saying that maximising, or that special sort called profit-maximising, is the main motive power of economic activity, economists today—like Smith in the first place—are doing no more and no less than to offer a scientific explanation. In doing so, they do not *endorse* maximising behaviour, as morally commendable in itself. In so far as they are scientists they neither approve nor disapprove the things they study, any more than a physiologist would approve of thyroid or a chemist disapprove of mercury. In their other roles, as men or citizens or public servants, economists may and often do deplore the excessively self-interested behaviour of many men. Yet as economists their only job is to explain the operation of the economy, and if "self-interest" does much to explain it, then common honesty requires us to face that unlovely fact. To face it is not to approve it.

Neither does facing the fact require economists to exaggerate its scope. Economics does not assume, and has absolutely no need to assume, that men are selfish and calculating. Economists are as well aware as anyone else that most men are benevolent, loving, spiteful, silly, courageous, malicious, gay and careless and thus—only in a restricted part of their action—rational and self-seeking. All they say is that economic theory can explain that part of men's behaviour that is rational and self-seeking. As there is a good deal of perfectly well-known behaviour that economic theory *can* explain, economists infer that a good deal of human behaviour *is* rational and self-seeking. For an economist to assume maximising behaviour is as though a physicist were to assume the law of gravity: in doing so the physicist neither lauds nor blames gravity, nor does he make the silly mistake of saying that because gravity is the dominant cause of *some* motions (such as free fall) it must be the sole cause of *all* motion (including, say, magnetic attraction). This path of detached rather than moralistic analysis which economics shares with all sciences was first laid down for it by Adam Smith.

GIVEN THAT "every man thus lives by exchanging, or becomes in some measure a merchant . . ." the next question is how exchange is carried on. The simplest technique is barter.

A farmer grows more potatoes than he wants, and a fisherman catches more trout than he can eat. They fall into a habit of exchanging potatoes for trout, which is satisfactory for both of them. But suppose that one day the farmer has temporarily had his fill of fish; how then can the fisherman buy potatoes? He might trade his trout with a neighbouring lumberman for some boards and then exchange the boards for potatoes. But this triangular barter puts a burden on the fisherman of finding something that the farmer will accept. In time the fisherman might have to spend far too much time and effort in finding something the farmer wants and in carrying it to him, and equally so for the other participants. Trade among them would break down, not because there was nothing they wished to exchange but because barter is so clumsy a mode of exchange.

A remedy can be found in money, which everyone will accept in exchange for goods, and which therefore obviates the searching and carrying that arise in barter. This simple yet revolutionary idea was recognised, as Smith points out, by primitive peoples. In some pastoral communities the commodity chosen to serve as money was often cows; among some American Indians it was the polished shell beads called "wampum"; and in many places it came to be gold or silver. What makes anything into money is the general consent of people to treat it as such, which may be codified in and fortified by the law, though it need not be. When the use of some particular commodity, be it cows, wampum, silver or any other, as money becomes well established in a community, the value of all other things is expressed in terms of it. In a community that uses salt as money, everybody comes to know that the price of cod is usually one ounce of salt per fish and the price of lamb thirty ounces per head and so on. In a community that uses silver as money, people will say that a lamb costs six ounces of silver. Money serves the same end, whatever stuff it is made of.

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But not all money is equally convenient. For one thing, silver and gold have certain advantages, being light for their value (unlike, say, seashells), able to be subdivided pretty easily (unlike a cow), and fairly imperishable (unlike fish or grain). They have accordingly been adopted by many peoples as their chief monetary commodities, though since Smith's time they have been superseded in many places by paper. Having adopted gold or silver, the next improvement was to establish tokens of dependable weight and fineness, coins, which relieve everyone of the need to assay and weigh the monetary metal before taking it in payment. All this evolution of money took place in response to practical common sense, and long before there were any economists to advise it.

HAVING ARRIVED at this point in analysis, Smith now raised one of the most fundamental questions of economic theory. What determines the particular value in exchange of any particular commodity at any given time? Why is a cow worth as much as twenty bushels of corn, or why, to put it in terms of money, is a modest car worth £1,000, a reasonable coat £60, and a haircut about £1? The monetary price of each good or service represents its relative value in exchange; how are the relative prices of those things determined? Why, to consider the hypothetical values above, should a car be worth about 17 coats and 1,000 haircuts? There is nothing about the intrinsic nature of the commodities and services that makes it obvious why they should exchange at those rates or at any other rates.

In fact, Smith argued, the one thing certain is that the *value in exchange* of any article is not determined by its *value in use*.

> The things which have the greatest value in use have frequently little or no value in exchange; and, on the contrary, those which have the greatest value in exchange have frequently little or no value in use. Nothing is more useful than water: but it will purchase scarce anything; scarce anything can be had in exchange for it. A diamond, on the contrary, has scarce any value in use; but a very great quantity of other goods may frequently be had in exchange for it. (vol. I, p. 25)

The only orderly relation between exchange-value and use-value that springs to mind at once is that the buyer of any commodity must feel that its use-value, to him, is at least as great as its exchange-value, otherwise he would not buy it. But among all the things that he does buy, the relations among their use-values are by no means the same as the relations among their exchange-values. This difficulty, which came to be known as The Paradox of Value, fascinated and irritated economists—as any scientific asymmetry irritates craftsmanlike scientists—until it was definitively resolved almost a century later by "marginal" analysis.

After saying what does not determine the relative values in exchange of commodities, Smith goes on to say what does determine it. At first he seems to say that relative values in exchange depend on the relative amounts of labour that go into making different goods. But he then makes it clear that this rule would hold only in a society so primitive—if any can be so primitive—that people produce goods without using any capital and without having established private ownership of land. Nevertheless, in order to illustrate the principle he considers the rate at which goods would exchange under such hypothetical conditions.

> If among a nation of hunters, for example, it usually costs twice the labour to kill a beaver which it does to kill a deer, one beaver should naturally exchange for or be worth two deer.

And the reason for this, he says, is that "it is natural that what is usually the produce of two days' or two hours' labour, should be worth double of what is usually the produce of one day's or one hour's labour."

The basic principle invoked here is that relative values in exchange are determined by relative costs of production. And it was probably in order to stress this principle that Smith chose an example in which the more expensive product, the beaver, will strike most people as being relatively of less value *in use*; it is much smaller, unfit for human food, and troublesome rather than pleasurable to hunt.

IT IS WORTH MENTIONING in passing that modern economists would agree with Smith that if it takes the hunter twice as much effort to kill the beaver, it is worth two deer, if in fact the same hunter typically hunts either animal and is equally skilled in hunting both. But their agreement does not rest on accepting at face value Smith's assurance that "it is natural." It rests instead on the much later idea of "opportunity cost." On this view the real cost of any good is not the difficulty of producing it, in terms of the amount of toil required to make it, but rather the sacrifices that must be made in order to have it, that is, the other goods or opportunities that must be forgone in order to get this one. So, in Smith's example, analysed in terms of opportunity costs, a beaver is worth two deer because in order to catch the beaver the hunter had to give up the opportunity to catch two deer. Similarly, for a cabinet-maker the opportunity cost of a table is the cabinet that he could have made with the same effort, tools, and raw materials. One

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advantage of thinking in terms of opportunity costs is that it emphasises the full range of choices any producer must make, not only in how he will produce any particular commodity but also as to which commodities he will produce. More important, this way of regarding the matter reveals a deeper meaning of cost which is often overlooked, that the cost of any object is fundamentally whatever has to be given up for it, by the producer and equally by the consumer. In the end, after all, costs are determined by values in use.

Relative costs of goods depend, in reality, on more than just the relative quantities of labour that go into producing them. Smith knew this very well. He used the beaver-deer example as a hypothetical illustration rather than as a description of reality. He went on to say that labour inputs must be measured in reality, not just by number of hours but also by hardships of one job as compared with another and by the comparative skilfulness of the workers. Costs will depend, moreover, on the amount of capital used in production. If an employer advances the salaries of ten workers, who must work (say) a month to finish a product that the employer can sell, and if he advances during that month also the price of the raw materials, then the cost of this capital will enter into the cost of the product. So, in the example that Smith gives, if the capital used in this way by an employer is £7,300, and if the interest rate is 10 per cent, then the annual cost of capital to that employer is £730, which is part of the cost of the year's output. Modern economists wish that Smith would have taken account here as well of "fixed capital"—machinery and buildings, and all other productive resources which have themselves been produced by human effort. Why he put the argument exclusively in terms of "circulating capital" is difficult to tell. It was certainly not for want of knowing about the use of machinery in production, for Smith referred repeatedly to machinery, as well he might, writing in the middle of that time of fertile mechanical invention which was later named the Industrial Revolution. Perhaps the explanation is that in Smith's time most people made their livings in agriculture. The small fraction that worked in towns generally engaged in trades and handicrafts, and only a tiny fraction worked in factories or mines, where the costs of machinery and plant would be very noticeable. For all the kinds of machinery that were being invented just then, and despite all the processes that were being mechanised, the number of people working in such industries was still quite small enough (certainly under 5% of the population) to help explain why Smith overlooked the cost of fixed capital even though he knew perfectly well about machinery. In any event, the oversight does not affect the validity of the argument that the cost of goods consists partly of the cost of capital used in producing the goods. And then, finally, Smith identified as the third component of the cost of any good the rent of the land that went into producing it.

HE WAS NOW READY TO USHER in the theme for which all the foregoing was merely a prelude. It is the explanation of how the market keeps the value-in-exchange (or price) of any good at the correct level. It is the explanation of a self-regulating mechanism which assures that over the long run the price of a commodity will equal the cost of producing it.

Smith starts this central exploration by positing a "natural price" of any commodity, which is the "correct" price in the long run of that commodity in a given place and during a given era. His question is, how does the market see to it that the price actually charged for a good is its correct price? His answer depends fundamentally on the businessman's determination to earn a profit. If the price he can get for say a hat at any given moment—in Smith's terminology, the "market price" as distinct from "natural price"; in modern economics, the "short-run price" as distinct from "equilibrium price"—is too low to afford him a profit, he will stop making hats. If the market price is so high that he makes unusually high profits, then he will expand his production of hats. The "natural price" then is that price which is neither too low nor too high, which does not result in stopping production nor expanding it but which ensures a steady flow of the commodity.

Given one more group of actors, the operation of the market mechanism could be analysed fully. They are the buyers, but "buyers" must be interpreted strictly. Many people might like to own a hat, but only those matter for the moment who are prepared to pay the price of a hat, the "effectual demanders", as Smith called them. They want a certain number of hats, and if not enough hats are available to satisfy all of them, some will outbid the others, which will raise the market price of hats. Conversely, if the supply of hats exceeds the quantity effectually demanded, then sellers will be left with unsold and undesired stocks, on which they earn no profits. In order to reduce these surplus inventories, the sellers may reduce the prices they ask and may even reduce the market price below the equilibrium price or natural price. At this point, the sellers will cut back production. In due course, as buyers enter the market, demand will drive the market price up again.

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IN SHORT, IN SMITH'S VIEW, whenever market price is different from natural price, the price mechanism automatically tends to correct itself. If the market price is too high, producers rush in to benefit from the high profits; if the market price is too low, producers withdraw in order to minimise losses. Whenever the output is too small, consumers bid up the market price; whenever the output is too large, sellers bid down the market price. The market price *tends* always towards the natural price. Market price is determined, in the short run, by accidents and mistakes. But in the long run it is determined by the operation of a self-regulating mechanism, a market propelled by *self-interest*—on the part of consumers as well as producers—and by *competition* among buyers and among sellers.

Besides being the level towards which the market price forever tends, the natural price has another significance. It is also the level at which the total cost of producing the commodity is correct or natural, or the level of price that is consonant with the natural rate of wages, the natural rate of profits and the natural rate of rent. Indeed, what made the natural price of a commodity seem natural to Smith was that it was correct, proper, or just—because it corresponds to the true costs of production. The price of a hat is justifiable, in Smith's view, when it exactly compensates its makers for their effort.

To establish what constituted the natural level of wages, of profits and of rent was, however, for Smith, a much more difficult problem. Indeed it was a problem that he did not solve very satisfactorily. The puzzle of how to explain why labour, capital and land are paid for at the rates that they are is part of the legacy of scientific questions that Smith left to his successors.

THE COMPONENT OF COST that Smith found it easiest to explain was wages. And it was particularly easy for him to define the lower limit of the natural rate of wages. Wages must be high enough to keep the worker alive. And if the race of workers was not to die away, wages must be high enough to enable workers to have children. But the natural rate of wages, Smith held, often rises well above this subsistence standard, especially in an expanding economy, where the long-term demand for labour is brisk because employers are constantly wanting to hire more labour in order to expand the output of commodities.

The natural rate of profits, Smith held, was determined largely by how much capital a society possesses at any given time. The more capital there is, the lower will be the natural rate of profit. Competition assures this outcome. Owners of capital seek to find profitable uses for it. The more capital they own, the more they seek to invest into profitable uses, the more they bid down the normal price of its use, that is the natural rate of profit, or as modern economists might say, the basic rate of interest. Smith's reasoning suggested that in a very rich society—one possessing a great deal of wealth, that is, a great deal of capital—the natural rate of profits would be very low. That this inference does not correspond with the experience of developed economies since Smith's time can be interpreted either as proof that Smith was in error or evidence that Smith's model did not make room for some of the major characteristics of modern economic life. In any event, the theory of what determines the rate of profits is very much under debate by economists today.

The third and last component of cost, the rent of land, Smith found least explicable. He held that rent is a residual, determined by how much of the natural price of a product is left after wages and profits, at their natural rates, have been paid out. A producer will pay a given rent for land if his enterprise yields enough income to pay that rent over and above the necessary wages and natural profits of the enterprise. Unfortunately this effort to analyse rent as a residual left Smith in a theoretical dilemma. Either price is determined by wages, profits and rent, each of which is determined by causes distinctive to itself; or if rent is determined by price, then it is no longer possible to say what determines price. Smith could not resolve this dilemma, though others did about a century later.

LEAVING ASIDE THE THEORETICAL GAPS in Smith's analysis of markets and prices, the broad sweep of his view was that markets work as a self-correcting mechanism. Markets tend towards equilibrium, a state which tends to persist when once achieved. At equilibrium, output of each commodity exactly equals effectual demand and the price of each commodity exactly equals the cost of producing it. At any departure from equilibrium, reactions would be set off throughout the system tending to restore it to equilibrium.

Smith's analysis of how the price system works is an objective scientific explanation, which like any other scientific explanation might be incomplete and partially mistaken (as indeed it was), but which did not in itself either praise or blame the Price System or suggest that it be preserved or revised. It merely explained the mechanism that makes market price tend towards natural price.

To this basic scientific analysis, Smith then added a non-scientific, normative layer. He implied that because the natural price of a

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commodity covers the natural cost of producing it, the natural price of a good is a just price for that good. In this way Smith reaffirmed the criteria established by the Scholastics, whose views had been transmitted to him by their own works as well as by dissident disciples such as Grotius, Puffendorf and Barbeyrac, and whose views Smith had regularly reviewed in his years of lecturing on moral philosophy while professor of that subject at Glasgow. Smith did not, like certain of his 17th-century predecessors, wave aside all moral considerations. On the contrary he faced the moral questions raised by the Scholastics, and answered them. He answered by asserting that the Price System tends to establish the universal reign of just prices.

YET SMITH WOULD NOT have satisfied the Scholastics. For they were inclined to think of the just price that would be charged by a just man, a decent man, moderately interested in gain perhaps, but very far from greedy, unwilling to take excessive advantage of the need of others. Smith, on the contrary, explained that just prices would emerge from a Price System operated by ordinary men, moved by self-interest, self-love, and often by greed. Whatever heights of virtue men might be capable of ascending, it was not virtue that ordinarily activated them.

> It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity, but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages.

The beauty of the Price System, according to Smith, is that it leads ordinary men to do good, that is to benefit their fellows, as an *unintended consequence* of their deliberate efforts to benefit themselves. So, in one of his most famous passages, Smith argues that the capitalist will tend always to invest capital where it will do the most good for workers and for everyone else in the nation.

> He generally, indeed, neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it. . . . He intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. (vol. I, p. 400)

In the same way, just prices are just not because they were intentionally made so by men who are benevolent or unfailingly just, but because the system within which they operate happens by good fortune—as if by an invisible hand—to be a good system. Smith was at one with the Scholastics in caring whether economic life was just. He was, one might almost say, something of a Scholastic himself, though a Scholastic with a difference.

THE SAME SET OF VIEWS that made him the last Scholastic made him the Nemesis of the mercantilists. For if prices tend always to be kept at the correct level by the self-seeking, self-stimulating reactions of private persons, then there can be little need for government to step in on the pretext of raising or lowering prices to "more beneficial" levels. If, further, prices tend always to cover the necessary costs of production, yielding to everyone involved in production (the labourer, capitalist, and landowner alike) a correct return for his efforts, then government need not step in on the pretext of making prices "more just." The most reasonable policy is "hands off." Government need not try to do what the market already does automatically.

To reinforce this fundamental attack on Mercantilism, Smith spent a great deal of effort rebutting the main beliefs of the mercantilists by showing that though their favourite policies could not help them much they would certainly harm everyone else. So, as for the argument that government must regulate foreign trade in order that the nation should acquire the greatest possible stock of silver and gold, Smith briskly dismissed it—much in the manner of Sir William Petty and Sir Dudley North by saying:

> A country that has no mines of its own must undoubtedly draw its gold and silver from foreign countries in the same manner as one that has no vineyards of its own must draw its wines. It does not seem necessary, however, that the attention of government should be more turned towards the one than towards the other object.

And he rounded out this part of the rebuttal by showing that a government could not prevent its treasure from being exhausted, if it tried to keep more on hand than was demanded for use as coin, jewellery and tableware.

Again, as to the favourite argument of the mercantilists, that a nation must depend on its treasure to finance foreign wars, Smith countered that whatever had been the case in the past, the costs of war in his time were generally met by drawing on current income rather than on accumulated wealth, a lesson that modern economists frequently repeat.

But his harshest criticism, his most ironic treatment, Smith reserved for the arguments that identified the interests of merchants with those of the public at large. He refused to accept that a set of policies beneficial to merchants, aiming to increase their profits, would thereby contribute to the public good by increasing the size of the "favourable" balance of trade. This argument was dispelled, in Smith's view, by recognising that foreign trade is not a sort of tug-of-war, a

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struggle in which one side was certain to lose whatever the other might gain. This perverted view arose from erecting "the sneaking arts of underling tradesmen . . . into political maxims for the conduct of a great empire." "Commerce, which ought naturally to be, among nations, as among individuals, a bond of union and friendship, has become the most fertile source of discord and animosity"—all because merchants persuaded people that what was profitable for themselves was necessarily good for the rest of the country. "They who first taught it were by no means such fools as they who believed it."

SMITH'S ATTACK was full-scale. Very little of the mercantilist mentality escaped his attention. But like other popular errors, this one too has great powers of survival. And so, although Smith demolished its intellectual foundations, mercantilism still exists: in, for instance, the tariff policies of most countries. Smith was better able to change men's beliefs, even to change them substantially, than to revise their desires. The will of some men to prosper at the cost of others is not broken by reading books on economics.

Being unusually sensitive to such desires, Smith was especially insistent that government limit itself to defence, police, administration of justice, education, and very little else. Only a government whose functions were severely limited was safe from being used by mercantilists to exploit their fellows. Only a government that refused to create monopolies for merchants and domestic producers, only one that would on the contrary try to destroy monopolies, would naturally aim at the public good rather than at the private good of particular groups. Such a government, limited in scope, follows "the obvious and simple system of natural liberty." Every man, as long as he does not violate the laws of justice, is left perfectly free to pursue his own interest his own way, and to bring both his industry and capital into competition with those of any other man, or order of men. The sovereign is completely discharged from a duty, in attempting to perform which he must always be exposed to innumerable delusions, and for the proper performance of which no human wisdom or knowledge could ever be sufficient; the duty of superintending the industry of private people, and of directing it towards the employments most suitable to the interest of the society. No man could do it, but the mutually accommodating efforts of all men could: it is the most glowing tribute ever paid to an economy coordinated by free competitive markets.

TAKEN AS A WHOLE, the "normative" components of Smith's argument can be summarised as follows. The market, when government does not interfere with its operation, tends to stability, which is desirable; and it distributes income in accordance with each person's contribution to output, a basis of distribution which is just. Government should not interfere with the free operation of the market because it would unduly reward one section of the community at the expense of others, which is unjust; and as it can never be so well informed or deeply concerned as the whole body of individual economic actors, its efforts must inevitably be less efficient, which is wasteful. The best policy, then, is for government to do nothing in the economic sphere *except* to enforce the laws preventing force and fraud, and to sustain (by taxation and public expenditure) those few necessary activities such as national defence, primary education and criminal justice, services which cannot be provided by private markets because they cannot be produced by profit-seeking enterpreneurs or would not be voluntarily purchased by all who benefit from them. Subject to these vital qualifications, which are generally overlooked, it is possible to adopt the shorthand formula that Smith advocated *laissez-faire*.

Is that policy, as Smith understood it, to be regarded as normative? If one equates the distinction between positive and normative with the distinction between "is" and "ought", then one might say that as any policy expresses a view about how things ought to be, every policy is normative. As Smith maintains that government *ought* not to interfere in the operation of markets, he must on this view be putting forth a normative prescription. Its normative character is further documented in that, as Smith himself insists, governments have in fact been intervening in economic affairs. In other words, his "ought" is directly opposed to what "is." And it follows, on this common view, that Smith committed the cardinal error of believing that he could deduce normative propositions from scientific propositions.

But the matter is not that simple. Smith was not issuing moral admonitions but technical advice. In order to understand why the latter can readily be mistaken for the former, it is necessary to distinguish between two senses of the word "ought." One sense is purely normative; it advocates an end which it urges men to pursue. To say that men ought to be compassionate, kind, just, pious, or prudent is to suggest ultimate ends to be pursued for their own sake, The other sense of "ought" is purely instrumental, taking the form "if you wish to accomplish such and such an end, you ought to do this." The difference

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can be summarised as that between an absolute imperative and a conditional imperative. The former might be exemplified by "You ought to be kind"—the latter by "If you wish to be kind, you ought to be less caustic." If the former is properly called normative, it is convenient to label the second as "quasi-normative." And it is vital to notice that quasi-normative statements are often indistinguishable in outward form from normative statements. When the physician orders a patient to rest, when he says "you ought to rest", that statement is quasi-normative, since it is prefaced by the implicit condition, "if you wish to prolong your life." Lawyers, accountants, engineers, indeed all professional and expert advisers speak in quasi-normative language, though they sometimes confuse themselves and their clients by omitting the condition preceding the imperative.

Now the quasi-normative statements, unlike normative ones, can properly be founded on scientific knowledge, as they often (though not always) are. For instance, an engineer's advice that his client "ought" to build a particular bridge with reinforced concrete is in effect a translation of certain propositions in theoretical mechanics coupled with particular information about the expansion constants of concrete and wrought-iron rods. The scientific version takes the form of a statement that if pressure is applied to a rod, it will compress in a certain way; the engineering version reverses this into the statement that if one wishes to compress a rod in a certain way, one must apply that sort of pressure to it. In a similar way, many conditional laws of science can be directly converted into conditional imperatives of technology. This is not to say that the application of scientific knowledge to practical purposes is an easy and automatic operation. On the contrary, it is often extremely difficult, not least because the practical effects which people wish to achieve comprise many conflicting or delicately balanced particular objectives. Nevertheless, in principle, quasi-normative statements (in some fields at least, economics being one) can be derived directly from theoretical scientific knowledge.

IT IS IN THIS SENSE that Smith's advocacy of *laissez-faire* is not a gratuitous addendum to his scientific theory but rather a closely linked corollary. It can be recognised as such if we understand it as quasi-normative rather than normative, and if we supply the conditional premise which Smith left largely unstated. Properly interpreted, Smith was saying this: "If we desire to maximise national income, while preserving the orderliness of economic processes and ensuring a just distribution of income, *then laissez-faire* is the best policy."

HAVING ESTABLISHED THAT Smith's policy was logically coherent with his scientific analysis, it is still open to us to ask further questions. Did he conclusively demonstrate that *laissez-faire* is the most effective policy at all times and places for implementing the ends he posited? Did he demonstrate—did he even believe—that the ends served by *laissez-faire* are the highest ends to which men can aspire?

The efficacy of *laissez-faire* as an instrument for maximising national income is a question still hotly debated by economists. Most of them would probably agree that if national income is measured by the value of goods and services exchanged in the market sector, and if markets were perfectly competitive, then *laissez-faire* could not be improved upon as a means of maximising income. But many maintain that well-being ought not to be measured exclusively in terms of goods and services exchanged in private markets, that markets can never in fact be perfectly competitive, and that the distribution of income effected by even a perfectly competitive market would be too unequal to accord with prevailing views of justice; from all of which they conclude that *laissez-faire* is not the most desirable policy. This debate will no doubt continue as long as free debate is permitted.

As to the broader question, whether we should believe or whether Smith himself believed that a community practising *laissez-faire* should be regarded as ideal, it seems easier to find a point of rest. On the one hand, *laissez-faire* carries with it the great benefit of maximising the individual's freedom from government interference, at least in respect of his economic activities. Much has been said since Smith's time about the intrinsic relations between economic freedom and other freedoms, and much remains to be said. Certainly those relations are complex. There exist nations in which freedom of speech and thought flourish despite economic centralisation, and there may have existed tyrannies which allowed substantial economic freedom though little or no political freedom. On the other hand, all freedoms coexist in liberal states and all are denied in totalitarian states. Economic freedoms do seem, on the evidence, to be contagious.

TURNING FROM FREEDOM to other values, the community practising *laissez-faire* seems open to the charge that it encourages material acquisitiveness at the cost of spiritual excellence and encourages impersonal relations to the detriment of love and friendship. Smith, as he showed plainly in his treatise on ethics, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, regarded selfishness as a vice and benevolence as the key to virtue. But men do

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not live by virtue alone. As for bread, Smith maintained that one could not depend on the baker's benevolence to supply it. This can be read, and generally is, as a sad admission by Smith that men are too far from being virtuous to make a society resting on virtue anything more than a utopian dream; and accordingly the society he advocates in *The Wealth of Nations* is interpreted as distinctly second best, not what he desired but what he felt men had to settle for.

Smith's ethical doctrine should, however, be interpreted quite differently. Men are capable, he maintains, of disinterested sympathy and affection, and it is from these natural sources that virtue stems. But affection and benevolence are feelings that every man naturally concentrates on a selected number of persons who are closest to him in the moral sense, his family, old friends, neighbours and compatriots, in descending order. Benevolence and affection cannot in their nature be extended to all the people whom a man encounters in his everyday world. With the many his relations must be impersonal and may yet be satisfactory provided they are just. Smith, in other words, does not regard the general impersonality of the market economy as a defect but as a necessary accommodation of society to the necessarily limited scope of love, friendship, and affection.

If men were content or able to live in tiny isolated tribes as bands of brothers, then love might solve all their problems—except the problems arising from parochial narrowness. If men were content to live in self-subsistent isolation, they could avoid all impersonal relations—but at the cost of excluding all strangers and everything novel. Life in the large and open world, which Smith posited and which prevails wherever men are civilised, cannot go on without the impersonality of markets. But as Smith made clear, this is compatible with virtue at the level of personal relations and justice at the level of impersonal relations. Far from being a hymn in praise of anarchic greed, *The Wealth of Nations* is a reasoned argument for justice, order, liberty and prudent plenty.

Douglas Dunn

Warriors

"O arms that arm, for a child's wars, the child!"
RANDALL JARRELL

THOUGH never in the wards of the hospital for
Disabled servicemen at Erskine—First World War—
I saw an old man wheelchaired through its Park on night
By an old man who was blind. The candles were alight
On chestnut trees, a lame destroyer on the Clyde
Was being nursed by tugs against the highest tide
Of May to its dismantlement. The wheelchaired man
Was watching, too, telling his friend, that veteran
And blinded one, all that was going on. No shock
Of pride or pity moved me then. Dumbarton Rock
Rose in the dusk, my own Gibraltar. History
Was everywhere as forts and battles, conscripting me.

My mother went to Erskine once with ladies from
Inchinnan Women's Guild. In bed when she came home,
I heard her tell my father how moved she'd been by these
Blinded basketweavers and nimble amputees.
In my imagination, there is a special place
For that night, for that Park, and for the expert face
Of the man in the wheelchair, and his friend who was blind.
If that is wrong, or nearly patriotic, I don't mind.
To me it's neither. For they had suffered all that gore
We played at, and made me see that as a guilty war,
A childhood. Neither willingness or wounds would lead
Me to them from the field. In no war would I bleed.

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NOTES & TOPICS

Hannah Arendt

HANNAH ARENDT was perhaps the most original and interesting, if also the most maddening, of 20th-century political philosophers. She was an existentialist, the pupil of Karl Jaspers, and later the editor of his writings. But as we all know, existentialism in metaphysics can go together with a great variety of beliefs in morals and politics, and Hannah Arendt's thoughts on these subjects were unpredictable without being unsystematic. She did not hesitate to argue by assertion; but she often backed up her assertions with some dazzling piece of historical reconstruction. She would take the central concepts of political theory—Freedom, for example, or Authority, or Revolution—and stipulate, prescribe, even impose her interpretation of them, while suggesting that at times when such ideas were better understood, men thought about them in her way. Yet she certainly did not set up to be an historian of ideas: even her essay entitled "What was authority?" was intended to tell us what authority is. Sometimes her method worked marvellously well; sometimes she was plainly and perversely wilful.

Hannah Arendt was born with the century in time to receive the best of the old type of German classical education before she studied metaphysics with Jaspers at Heidelberg; when the Nazi persecution of the Jews forced her to seek (via France) exile in America, she was already a well-established scholar, a contemporary of Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, and Herbert Marcuse. Like them, she found the philosophical climate of American pragmatism uncongenial. While exiled Austrian philosophers, such as Wittgenstein, Popper and Carnap, passed easily enough from the milieu of Viennese science to that of Anglo-Saxon empiricism, those few philosophers who came from the Germany of the classics (and Hegel and Heidegger) found the transition more difficult. But Hannah Arendt lived long enough to see positivism lose favour in the English-speaking world, and in her later years she became, despite her profound distaste for modernity and liberalism, a fashionable intellectual, and a much-admired contributor to the radical press.

Hannah Arendt's first book in English was *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), basically an attempt by a refugee from the Third Reich to explain the rise of Nazism and Communism. She sought the explanation mainly in the cultural and political circumstances of Europe in the 19th century. The book is virtually unrivalled as an exercise in political pathology, but one result of her concentration on the experience of Europe is that she circumscribed to some extent the applicability of the term "totalitarian." At all events, her devastating criticism of totalitarianism did not prevent her in her later years from writing with "dialectical" sympathy for certain communist régimes in Asia.

Her best-known contribution to political philosophy is perhaps *The Human Condition*, first published in 1958. The title itself proclaims the existentialist belief that there is no human nature or essence, but only a human situation or predicament. Hannah Arendt said that if there were a human nature "only a god could know and define it." She proceeded in this book to build her argument round the existentialist doctrine that man is radically free in the sense of being a free undetermined agent, responsible for everything he does. The distinctive feature of her argument, however, is that she adds to this affirmation of metaphysical freedom (something which everyone has) a theory of political freedom, which is something men have to strive to achieve. While she cannot, on her own principles, admit that the realisation of such political freedom is man's natural goal, she does, nevertheless, argue that it is man's highest and noblest goal. Thus the conventional existentialist doctrine that all men are free (*i.e.*, have free will) is supplemented by the claim that only the best men are free, that freedom is the prize of heroes.

Her account of the origin of totalitarianism has also a recognisably existentialist starting point. The "loneliness" of modern men, following the "death of God", the rootlessness of the masses in industrialised society, their lack of a shared sense of a place in the world—all this, she suggests, conspired to drive them to seek the shelter of totalitarian ideology, to escape from the burden of their metaphysical freedom in a movement where everyone was told what to do. The rise of 19th-century imperialism and bureaucracy also helped, she thought, to accustom people to the idea of rule by faceless institutions; and the spread of the idea of "race" enabled men to resolve their crisis of identity by seeing themselves, not as individuals or persons, but as members of a mythical collectivity, the *Herrenvolk*.

Hannah Arendt's explanation of totalitarianism is thus as much sociological as historical (although she makes few efforts to separate one type of explanation from another); but the central theme of her narrative is a story of man born free but running away from the anxiety of that condition into ever more elaborate forms of servitude. Like Rousseau, she had some definite

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ideas of her own as to what freedom is. She repudiated the whole liberal conception of freedom as a private right of the individual to be preserved against the intrusion of other men, including men in authority. For Hannah Arendt political freedom was something that can be experienced only in the public realm; freedom is action, freedom is positive participation in the political life of one's city.

THE HUMAN CONDITION, as she described it, permits a man only three forms of activity: labour, work, and action. *Labour* is the meanest way of spending one's life, for labour is the tedious, repetitive effort of producing enough in the way of food and so forth to keep alive. It is an activity dictated by natural need, and so falls squarely within the realm of necessity as oppossed to freedom. *Work* is human activity directed to ends other than those exacted by nature and necessity; its products are not immediately consumed, they are the creations of art and craft, the work of an individual, a master; they do not belong to the realm of necessity, but they do fall within the private as opposed to the public domain. Work is thus inferior to action. *Action*, the third and highest form of human activity, is that by which man realises his identity.

> With word and deed we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth. Man seeks immortality. To realise this end he must affirm his identity through speech and action, and this is precisely where politics comes in. For it is the unique genius of politics that it "teaches men how to bring forth what is great and radiant. . . ."

This heroic conception of politics prompts Hannah Arendt sometimes to speak, like Sartre, of violence with a certain romantic yearning. When men die a violent death in the company of others, she writes, "It is as though Life itself, the immortal life of the species, nourished as it were by the sempiternal dying of its individual members. . . is actualised in the practice of violence." On the other hand, Hannah Arendt disapproved of the kind of violence favoured by Sartre and many other socialist revolutionaries. "The practice of violence. . . changes the world", she writes, "but the most probable change is a more violent world." The truth of the matter is that she disapproved of most of the revolutions and most of the revolutionary movements that the world has known since 1789, not because of their violence but because they were directed toward what she saw as the wrong ends, namely the achievement of some social or economic transformation.

It is not so much that she repudiated socialism but that she rejected the whole category of the social. She noted that the concept of society was unknown to the Greeks, who distinguished a public thing, the *polis*, on the one hand, and a private thing, the household, on the other. What is called "society" today, she argued, is not part of the public domain at all, but the household writ large; and the concerns of socialism are not genuinely public and political matters, but economic, material, domestic concerns, which belong to the realm of nature and necessity. Hence all those revolutions since the French Revolution which have had social objectives are not, from her point of view, political movements at all; she would not even allow them the name of "revolution." The only kind of revolution which Hannah Arendt was willing to regard as a genuine revolution was one directed to establishment of freedom; the events in America in 1775–76 thus counted as an authentic revolution, as were the rising of the Paris Commune in 1871 and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956.

SHOULD HANNAH ARENDT be counted among these theorists who sought to abolish privacy? There is a certain temptation to do so. By assigning the importance she did to the public, and making action in public the supremely valuable form of human activity, by suggesting that freedom is to be experienced only in such public action; by recalling, with approval, the Greek view of the low status of the household compared to that of the public realm, and by stressing the etymological connection between "privacy" and "privation", Hannah Arendt seemed to be at one with those who belittle privacy. Indeed it has been said that "privacy" is a pejorative word in her writings. It often is, but it is not always. For Hannah Arendt does in at least one chapter in *The Human Condition* speak of the need to defend privacy in the modern world. "The greatest threat to privacy", she writes, "is not the abolition of private wealth, but the abolition of private property in the sense of a tangible worldly place of one's own." She gave as a reason for this the urgency of our need of our private possessions, and "a reliable hiding place from the common public world"; and she adds

> A life spent entirely in public, in the presence of others becomes, as we would say, shallow. While it retains its visibility, it loses the quality of rising into sight from some darker ground which must remain hidden if it is not to lose its depth in a very real, non-subjective sense. The only efficient way to guarantee the darkness of what needs to be hidden against the light of publicity is private property, a privately owned place to hide in.

These quotations are enough to show that while Hannah Arendt was a theorist who put an extraordinary value on the public, she is not to be thought to be one of those who are against the

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private. Indeed the distinction she draws between the public and the social helps us to recognise that much of the danger to privacy today lies in what she calls the "social." The real enemies of privacy in the modern world are "social theorists"; theorists who reject the Aristotelian conception of man as a political animal in favour of some image of man as a social animal, and their aim is to "rescue" the individual from his privacy and merge him into a community or commune or some other form of family writ large. For Hannah Arendt politics is the supreme activity for man precisely because man is *not* a social animal.

Given her exalted conception of freedom, it is something unlikely to be often found. In ancient Greece and Rome, where at least in some few places and at some few times citizens participated in politics in the way that she recognises as action, men were free. But there is none of Hannah Arendt's form of freedom to be enjoyed in the liberal, democratic, constitutional, and representative forms of government that are the pride of the modern Western world. In her sense of politics there can be no politics under such systems. She accepted this conclusion, and she saw the possibility of participatory politics, and hence of freedom, only in revolutionary situations, such as occurred in Russia in 1905 and 1917, when workers formed themselves into councils, or in America in 1775–76, where the citizens (if only the more prominent ones) took an active part in the foundation of a Republic. Only in those heroic moments, she seemed to think, has modern man tasted freedom or had any experience of what politics actually is.

Hannah Arendt wrote a fair amount of journalism, of which the most noted was her account of the trial of *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (1963). This shocked many readers, including those used to her paradoxical way of putting things.[1] Her demand for heroes made her alarmingly contemptuous of *l'homme moyen sensuel*, even when he was Hitler's victim. Her views on current political problems were not always easy to follow. At one time her insistence on the distinction between the public and the economic (or "household") realm led her to countenance racial segregation in schools: but her belief that politics could be experienced in revolutionary situations also led her to subscribe to some of the fantasies of the New Left about communist-controlled "Liberation Fronts" being able to enlarge men's liberties. If her more academic work gave the impression that she was some kind of conservative, her journalism made it clear that Hannah Arendt was altogether *hors categorie*, a unique intellectual mixture of the reactionary and the revolutionary.

Maurice Cranston

[1] See François Bondy's "On Misunderstanding Eichmann" ENCOUNTER (November 1961); John Gross's critique "Arendt on Eichmann" (November 1963) and the exchange of letters between Hannah Arendt and Gershom Scholem in the January 1964 ENCOUNTER.

European Notebook

Giants on the French Left

Thorez & Aragon—By FRANÇOIS BONDY

MONUMENTAL BIOGRAPHIES have just been published, devoted to the two best-known French Communists: 630 pages (from Fayard) to Maurice Thorez, the Party's former Secretary-General, who outlived Stalin but did his very best to remain true to his example; and 440 pages (from Le Seuil) to Aragon, the Party's "Bard", who has veered between inquisitorial dogmatism and a belated protest against post-Stalinist persecution (at the trial of Siniavsky and Daniel and the occupation of Czechoslovakia). Louis Aragon referred to the effects of the 1968 invasion in *Les Lettres Françaises* as "a spiritual Biafra", whereupon his periodical forfeited Party backing and was compelled to cease publication (mainly because it lost access to its numerous subscribers in the East). The same week, he accepted a high Soviet decoration. He is still a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

Maurice Thorez, "*un fils du peuple*" (to quote his thrice-revised and in fact ghost-written "autobiography") died in 1964, shortly after his 60th birthday. The biography devoted to him by Philippe Robrieux, once a young and ardent Communist, is thoroughly documented and is of considerable interest. It bears the subtitle: "Secret Life and Public Life". "Secret" might have been replaced by the less sensational but more apt "private", for little secrecy surrounded the fact that he was the illegitimate son of a grocer and a working-class girl (and her husband

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later made him an excellent foster-father). Nor was it such a secret that his marriage to Aurore (their son is now an architect of some repute) was soured by his lengthy stays in Moscow; and that his long association with Jeanette Vermeersch, who was 19 when they first met, developed into a political factor because Jeanette was abrim with political ambition and indeed became *de facto* head of the French Communist Party (after her consort's stroke) without any mandate save his personal faith in her.

The features of Thorez's career which used to be "secret"—his sympathy for Leon Trotsky and his links with that early Bolshevik dissident Boris Souvarine—have often been reported in the past. As to what was unknown, *e.g.* where Thorez hid after deserting from his French Army regiment on Party orders in 1939, the present biographer is incapable of anything but conjecture; but it can only have been a short time before he made his way to the Soviet Union via Hitler's Germany.

What is noteworthy is Thorez's long-standing association with the Czech-born *apparatchik* Eugen Fried, his mentor (and, perhaps, only friend), who subsequently married Thorez's divorced wife Aurore. Fried played a major role in the Party, but he received no mention whatsoever in the history of French Communism written by Jacques Fauvet, the editor of *Le Monde*. His importance was probably aired for the first time (in an article in my old review *Preuves*) by the former leading Communist André Ferrat. The circumstances under which Fried was shot by unknown persons in Brussels in 1943 suggest that this was a Soviet secret service operation, it being extremely improbable that the Nazis would have failed to interrogate Fried and his wife if they had been aware of his identity and function. *Apparatchiks* with careers like that of Fried were not infrequently murdered or executed by their own organisation.

"AMINER" (according to legend), Maurice Thorez was in reality a bright school-boy who later went to work in an office; he was a self-taught man who was so quick to learn that he could acquire remarkably good German even after sustaining a stroke in middle age. Although devoid of originality and political ideas of his own (not to mention familiarity with the Marx, Engels and Hegel texts which he so often quoted), he did accumulate a certain amount of intellectual baggage.

Thorez is said to have had in all his great Communist career only two private interviews with Stalin, who always commanded his unqualified allegiance. It is extremely interesting to observe how a Western Communist leader of those years had to dichotomise himself between the Great-Man role assumed for the benefit of his militants and voters at home and the abject and unwavering vassalage which was *de rigueur* within the Kremlin's orbit. "De-Stalinisation" came as a blow to Thorez, from which he never recovered. The man who had always prudently trimmed his sails to the wind became an overt foe of Nikita Khrushchev, and he did all he could to postpone disclosure of Stalin's "crimes" and to defer all attempts at "thaws" and "liberalisation."

One still finds it curious that this trend towards liberalisation and de-Stalinisation came, not from the "civilised West" but from the "primitive East"—from the higher reaches of the Soviet régime and the Bolshevik Party. The large French Communist Party, with its many prominent writers, artists and scholars, was *palaeo*-Stalinist. The post-1954 Soviet system, by contrast, was a cauldron of unrest, of ideological debate and even receptivity to a few new ideas.

Perhaps one must have experienced this paradoxical situation at first hand to appreciate it fully! However, Robrieux's biography not only confirms what we already know; by interviewing numerous witnesses and thoroughly researching his subject, he has unearthed many new particulars and shed much new light. That a veritable cult should have grown up round this very averagely endowed man (if an able speaker and organiser), that his 50th birthday should have become an occasion for nothing short of a ritual homage, and that he should altogether have failed to stage an equally moving celebration in honour of his 60th birthday (after Stalin's death)—all these things contain grotesque elements of human comedy.

Here is Thorez in his luxurious villa in the South of France, carefully noting what gifts and letters are sent to mark each of his birthdays and bestowing due favour or reprehension. . . . One cannot help being reminded of the *Roi Soleil* and his chronicler the Duc de Saint-Simon (mentioned, by the way, several times by Robrieux himself). Everyone knows that General de Gaulle had a touch of Louis XIV—and indeed the satirical magazine *Le Canard Enchaîné* for years published reports on the General's "court" couched in Saint-Simonian language. But wasn't the "opposing camp" also a very French court, complete with its own favourites and etiquette? Maurice Thorez was a fabricated figurehead, a leader behind whom others did the thinking and others made the decisions, and others even produced the ghost-written memoirs. Still, he was not an un-person, and he makes a fit subject for biography. Maurice Thorez called the Soviet

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Union "my home", yet his stature as a Frenchman moved General de Gaulle to extol his "feeling for *l'Etat*." He has personified a remarkable chapter of contemporary political history.

LOUIS ARAGON—as an author known simply as "Aragon"—considered himself a particularly close friend of Maurice Thorez, and he celebrated Thorez's return from a lengthy spell of recuperation in the Soviet Union with one of his most embarrassing dithyrambic encomiums. Still, he is a major French novelist and poet. His biographer, Pierre Daix, used to co-edit *Les Lettres Françaises* with him. Unlike Aragon, Daix left the Party after the ousting of Solzhenitsyn; he was his first translator and has published a notable book about him. His biography of Aragon can scarcely be called that. A better adjective would perhaps be "respectful", and that surely is not the best or even proper basis for biography; but it characterises almost all the books devoted to Aragon, as if that literary eminence drew unto himself only those so dependent on him or spellbound by his power and influence that they write of him on their knees.

Like Thorez—but in this case more importantly—Aragon is an illegitimate child, being the natural son of a senior government official and *homme de lettres*. The fact was long concealed from him. He knew his mother as an "elder sister" and did not discover the true circumstances of his birth until much later. Aragon has been more of a virtuoso than a creative spirit in terms of intellectual and artistic achievement. His friend André Breton (the two young medical students became acquainted during their military service in a Paris hospital during World War I) was less talented as a poet but vastly superior as a human and artistic force in the world.

Aragon was one of the best and most effective writers of the Surrealist school, which he repudiated and denounced at a congress of the Communist International in Kharkov in 1930 without ever cutting adrift from it entirely. He then became the French Communist Party's keenest polemicist and most virulent inquisitor. He who had experimented so freely became the dogmatist of socialist realism, denying to the young the very right to go their own way—wrong track or not—of which he himself had taken full advantage. A group of Communist intellectuals, who were associated with the newspaper *Action*, rebelled against his literary despotism in 1947 and then later capitulated—a significant episode completely omitted in Daix's account. A zealous champion of Lysenko, as of the Great Purges' show trials in Moscow and Eastern Europe, Aragon took on the strange proportions of an inquisitor with the soul of a heretic, a dogmatist with the soul of an artist, a connoisseur of power and language alike.

A clash with the Party occurred after Stalin's death (1953) when Aragon published a Picasso drawing in *Les Lettres Françaises*—this showed a youthful and Asiatic-looking Stalin of a type which the Party found incompatible with their image of the venerable "Father of the People". Aragon stood up for Roger Garaudy, initially a doctrinaire, then a dissident ideologue, but he did not oppose his expulsion from the Party. In 1966 *Les Lettres Françaises* identified itself with the "Prague Spring" and the new liberalisation movement in general, but Aragon never attacked the Party head on. He was, and still is, tolerated as an elderly *enfant terrible*, a Party adornment for whom every allowance is made.

Among Aragon's many pieces of defamation there is one which occurs in the first version of his novel cycle *Les Communistes* (later revised). This was levelled at his erstwhile friend Paul Nizan, who left the Party after the Hitler-Stalin Pact and was killed in action in 1940. Aragon denounced Nizan posthumously as a "police informer", without a shred of proof. The Paris atmosphere in which he did so—subsequently described by Jean-Paul Sartre—was one which brooked no contradiction from any quarter; the Communist Party in post-Liberation France exercised a cultural dictatorship.

Aragon's union with Elsa Triolet, a Russian authoress whose sister was married to Mayakovsky, created just as exemplary and power-conscious a "royal couple" as were Maurice Thorez and Jeanette Vermeersch. Elsa was very well informed about the persecutions in Stalinist Russia. It was noticeable that, when drawing on these experiences after Stalin's death in a novel entitled *The Memorial*, she felt more at ease than under the earlier restrictive Party guide lines with which she had so rigidly complied.

Pierre Daix does almost nothing to dispel the semi-obscurity surrounding much that one would like to know about Aragon's political activities and his wielding of cultural power at the head of the Communist-led writers' association *Comité National des Écrivains*. He reverentially quotes from good, bad, and indifferent poems without any attempt to discriminate. Perhaps we shall have to wait until after Aragon's death for an objective portrait and discerning interpretation of the man and writer. Like those before him but on an even grander scale, Pierre Daix has missed his chance. Even Communists with feet of clay should be seen upright and in the round.

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A Stalinist in America

By Stephen Miller

"NOSTALGIA," Robert Nisbet has said, "is the rust of memory." One of the ways nostalgia currently operates is decade-mongering. We make sense of the recent past by sorting it into decades, seeing such ten-year periods as different "countries" of the past, each with its distinctive customs and cultural habits: dress, language, and entertainment. This instant history, though, is not totally inappropriate, since during the past fifty years certain significant historical events have come along approximately every ten years to shape a decade.

The returns from the American Sixties are still coming in—apologias from both policy-makers and those in the opposition. One of the *least* significant works in this vein, if we judge it by the quality of its political analysis, is H. Bruce Franklin's self-styled "political autobiography", *Back Where You Came From*, which was published in the United States last year. An "activist" professor of English who was fired from his job at Stanford University for urging students to wreck the University Computer Center, Bruce Franklin definitely qualifies as a Sixties person.

The rhetoric of Franklin's book, though, smacks of the Thirties. Far from being your average left-wing professor, Franklin is, *mirabile dictu*, a Stalinist (though to do him justice as a Sixties person he has been influenced, or so he says, by Mao). But only in Marxist works that were written in the Thirties do we find the kind of language that pervades Franklin's book. For example, the book is dedicated

> To our children ... and to all the other young comrades of the world born in the red dawn of freedom

and the book ends with the following profession of faith:

> We live in the early dawn of human history, when we can see the possibility of communism—a world of peace, abundance, creativity, and freedom.

Indeed, reading this book, which was published by a reputable New York publisher, Harper's Magazine Press, one rubs one's eyes in disbelief: can anyone, at this late date in the 20th century, write such drivel? Can anyone be so appallingly ignorant of the realities of modern history? One can hardly call Professor Franklin a Marxist, for what respectable Marxist would speak nowadays of the "science of Marxism"? Or would speak of the impasse of "bourgeois physics"—that is, the physics of Einstein and Heisenberg? Franklin argues that

> ... dialectical materialism ... transcends this impasse precisely because its foundation is consciously purposeful, not supposedly "neutral" and "objective", and its purpose is in part to smash the alienation of mind and body.

Such rote phrases beg for some hidden explanation; the poor man must have been brainwashed; otherwise, why would he write in this incantatory manner?

Franklin's prose is not much better than his argument. A man with, as he claims, "a genius IQ", a man educated at two excellent American schools, Amherst College and Stanford University, a man who taught at both Stanford and Johns Hopkins, he is given to writing such inept sentences as the following: "I found my world expanding as I related for the first time in my life to Black people." Or: "My underlying attitude toward Amherst was still alienation." But it's pointless to go on, for as Pope said of another squeaking puppet:

> *Satire or sense, alas! can Sporus feel?*
> *Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel?*

Though it's not worth flapping this bug, it may be instructive to see how Franklin has fared as a self-proclaimed Stalinist.

FRANKLIN IS CONVINCED that his political stance has made him a Dangerous Person, someone to be feared by those in control of "the dinosaur system embodied in the United States." And so he says in his usual tone, dripping with unctuous self-importance:

> I have personally had a small taste of the consequences of being perceived (accurately I hope) as a danger to our rulers.

Small taste indeed! After Franklin was finally thrown out of Stanford, he went on to teaching posts at Wesleyan, Yale, and Rutgers. Recently, he received a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to study literature written by ex-prisoners. He has also published another book, entitled

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The **Penguin Publishing Company** are offering an annual award of £500 in memory of **George Orwell.**
The award will be given for an article, essay or a series of articles commenting on current political, social or cultural issues anywhere in the world. The work must have been published in the UK either in a newspaper, periodical or pamphlet in the preceding year. For the first award any article or pamphlet which appeared in 1975 will be eligible. The judges will be looking for originality, literary merit and expressive power.

The following have agreed to serve on the panel of judges:

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Submissions to **Penguins** should be sponsored either by the editor of the publication in which the article or articles originally appeared or by the organization which commissioned the pamphlet. No entry will be considered unless it is so sponsored.

The closing date for receipt of entries is 31 March 1976. Entries should be addressed to George Orwell Prize, Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middx.

The Essential Stalin: Major Theoretical Writings, 1905–1952. Apparently some people at Doubleday thought that his credentials as the only *echt* Stalinist in American academic circles entitled him to be the editor of old Dzhugashvili's writings.

Though Franklin may complain about the "dinosaur system", he doesn't bite the hands that feed him, public hands or private hands. Rutgers University, where he currently teaches, is a state university, supported by the taxes of the people who live in New Jersey. And everyone knows where the Rockefeller Foundation's money comes from. Moreover, for all his professed hatred of his former "professional career as a petty-bourgeois intellectual", he continues to pursue such a career, teaching (composition and science fiction) at Rutgers—and ever ready to apply for lucrative grants from rich "capitalist" foundations.

So Franklin thrives, but he has had *some* difficulties. The "System" arrested him five times, though he has never been convicted. And Rutgers University met with some resistance to his appointment. In order to meet such objections, the University came up with a "position paper" in which it was argued that "the academic needs of the students of the college would be exceedingly well met by adding a scholar of Professor Franklin's distinction to the faculty." Noble sentiments, but Franklin himself has already disavowed his previous scholarly work as being insufficiently Marxian. In fact Franklin argues that those who analyse a work of literature by speaking of its complexity, irony, and ambiguity are completely under the sway of "decadent bourgeois ideology." Either those responsible for the Rutgers position paper have not read Franklin's book, or Franklin himself is a trimmer.

The University's position paper also argues "that no University worthy of the name can set tests of political orthodoxy as a requisite for faculty appointment." Elevated sentiments again, but surely no University worthy of its name should devote itself to the care and feeding of someone who is an apologist for one of the two greatest mass murderers of our century, someone who—if the red dawn of freedom ever arrives—would have no compunction about dismantling the whole academic shebang, infected as it is by decadent bourgeois ideology. Though the dust-jacket calls Professor Franklin's vision "compassionate", the man is rich in visions of revenge; towards the close of his book he says ominously that "everybody knows what is meant by *we* and *they* . . . .", and surely every student of *who/whom* knows what will be done when the dawn breaks.

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A LINGERING ideological curiosity of the Sixties is the endemic *bien-pensant* liberal need to be fair and generous to those who, like Bruce Franklin, possess a "pure" or "idealistic" faith. Franklin means well, one can hear them saying to each other, though of course he is a bit naive. In a recent issue of the *Yale Review*, a local professor suggests that "we take Franklin seriously ... because he is a Horatio Alger in reverse." Like other activist professors, Franklin supposedly went from academic riches to rags because of his militance, "a radicalism that, even when tame, endangers their careers." Bent upon being generous, the *Yale Review*'s apologist can't even bring himself to read Franklin's book, for there is nothing "tame" about Franklin's radicalism, and clearly Franklin's career has not been especially endangered.

Another American academic, reviewing Franklin's book in the *Atlantic Monthly*, also wants to make sure that he is being eminently fair. Though he is somewhat uneasy about "the unrelenting coherence of Bruce Franklin's imagined world", he ends on a pleasantly positive note, wishing Franklin "Good luck" on his new project. Amid all this bowing and scraping, it takes an honourable democratic socialist of the Old School to call a spade a spade. Irving Howe in *Dissent* calls Franklin a "buffoon" and "a Maoist of the California school", and he musters a bit of well-deserved contempt for a man who persists in paying homage to the founding father of the Gulag Archipelago.

As I WRITE the newspapers have been filled with the doings of another radical, the erstwhile Black Panther, Eldridge Cleaver, another Sixties person. Cleaver has come back from seven years of exile in Algeria, Cuba, and North Korea; and he returns, chastened and penitent, to face what might be a long prison sentence for jumping bail and parole violation. This prodigal son, who once preached bloody revolution, or perhaps only the violent restructuring of all institutions, has now persuaded himself that "with all its faults the American system is the freest ... in the world." Couldn't the Rockefeller Foundation, in its infinite wisdom, be entreated to fund an Eldridge Cleaver Travelling Fellowship so that future H. Bruce Franklins might be awarded grants to have a closer look at the already "liberated" world with its "peace, abundance, creativity, and freedom"?

As for those administrators at Rutgers who were responsible for the position paper on the hiring of Franklin, condign punishment might well be a year spent as a pupil of the "alienation-smashing" Professor Franklin, with his lectures on Marxist composition and seminars in Stalinist science fiction. For surely what could be more in the spirit of the higher academic integrity than that they themselves should co-participate in the programme which they are inflicting upon their eager innocent students? What university worthy of the name can be considered fair and liberal without a chair for wilful ignorance, unctuous self-importance, and egregious stupidity?

Backroads

No one was ever lost on backroads.
Their intrigues end in signposts, farmhouse doors,
The cottages their tributary lanes
Prompt to discover. These bent miles, the closest
Trails they go, are not more subtle
Than the minds that planned, the hands that laid them.

Still at their meetings creeping fields infringe,
An inch more than last year. Briar and branch
Conspire over the tar, the shears' edge,
The scythe's last swing forgotten. Another
Lane meanders to a square the weeds have taken,
Stone ribs in the undergrowth where lives were.

Frank Ormsby

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The Migrant Muse

Saint-John Perse (1887-1975)—By J. M. Cocking

Heraclitus and Ecclesiastes may seem to be present in Perse's most typical lines. Eternal change is sometimes a river, more often the sea; human history is as cyclical as the seasons. In "Exile" the sea is "the same wave uttering/ One long phrase without pause forever unintelligible. . . ."[1] In "Rains", the portents are of life as "Unkept promises! ceaseless sowings of seed! And smoke-curves there on the highway of men!"[2] In this unintelligible flux the only spiritual enlightenment is through poetry, miming the language of the cosmos in terms of human consciousness, and all that matters is the maintenance of the human spirit as Perse understood it. Claudel, writing of "Winds", teased Perse—who as a young man was one of those who successfully resisted Claudel's attempts to bully people into conversion—by turning the destructive but purifying gales of his poem into something like Pentecostal winds blowing in the first place from the Old Testament. Perse, he said, avoided the word God—religiously.

Perse could see himself through Claudel's eyes, and wrote in a letter to him:

> "What could be more wretched, more tragic even, in its absurd contradiction, than this perennial vocation of a spirituality with no religious aim or object; in which everything in the human being, in human impatience with the human condition, is only a vain insurgence and an endeavour to break out of human limitations? The poet's action itself is, for me, a mode of knowledge only to the extent that it is a rule of life which keeps us quicker, though with the quick exposed, on the reverse slope of appearances."[3]

For the hither slope of appearances is metaphysical futility, and the poet is often imaged in Perse's poetry as a two-sided being; ideally at the meeting of the two slopes, often slipping or climbing on the one or the other. Claudel pulled Perse's poetry towards religion; years later Perse pulled Claudel's patron saint of poetry away from it. Dante, he said at the 1965 centenary, "seems by instinct to make legitimate for his time a will to power beyond the limits of Christian orthodoxy."[4]

Mentions of gods are plentiful enough in Perse's poetry, and life in the true spirit is called "divine"; but his divinity is entirely immanent. Birth, copulation and death, the vicissitudes of history on the grand scale, the beautiful or curious details of the sensible world—these are enough to engage his fascinated interest and stir his lyricism. The epic feeling in his poetry comes from his ethic, which is a self-consciously virile stoicism centred on enterprise, exploration and conquest. His gods fuse the human response to the elements, the natural forces without, and the impulses of the unconscious, the natural forces within. When a particular god appears it is Ea, god of the abyss, the member of the Sumerian trinity who is said by some to prefigure the Greek Prometheus. Claudel said of himself that he was

[1] Quotations in English are taken wherever possible from *Collected Poems*, with translations by W. H. Auden, Hugh Chisholm, Denis Devlin, T. S. Eliot, Robert Fitzgerald, Wallace Fowlie, Richard Howard, Louise Varèse (Princeton University Press, 1971). Footnotes give the page reference to this collection, followed by the French text and page reference to the *Oeuvres complètes* (Pléiade, 1972). 151. ". . . la même vague proférant/Une seule et longue phrase sans césure à jamais inintelligible. . . ."(126)

[2] 193. "Promesses non tenues! Inlassables semailles! Et fumées que voilà sur la chaussée des hommes!" (152)

[3] My translation. Pléiade 1017. Letter dated 1 August 1949. "Quoi de plus misérable, de plus tragique même, dans son absurde contradiction, que cette vocation intarissable d'un spiritualisme sans objet ni fin religieuse; où tout, de l'être humain, dans l'impatience de la condition humaine, n'est que vaine irruption et tentative d'effraction au-delà des limites humaines? La fonction même du poète, en tant que mode de connaissance, n'est pour moi qu'une règle de vie qui nous tienne plus vivant, fût-ce à vif, sur l'autre versant de l'apparence."

[4] 661. "Dante semble, pour son temps, légitimer d'instinct une volonté de puissance hors des limites de l'orthodoxie chrétienne. . . ." (455)

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for all Jupiters against all Prometheuses. Perse is for both. Ea is not only a kind of Prometheus but the creator god. For Perse, as for Heraclitus, the rule of life is felt as a physical constituent of the things of the world, which are full of power and pattern.

IN HIS EARLIEST POEMS Perse called up all the things of this world and found them good, but the theme of exile is in his poetry right from the start. His true human spirit is always looking forward, but to define his intuition of it Perse looks backward—towards his own childhood, as if in the depths of his mind there were an equivalent to Citizen Kane's "Rosebud", or into the human past. The present is too set on wealth and comfort. He has been called ascetic, but his asceticism is of the kind that young people running away from urbanism call "back to basics", which in his case include sexuality and the dark forces. The world of his "Anabasis" is something like the Arabia of T. E. Lawrence; his "Seamarks" reads sometimes like the essence of D. H.

He disliked the towns of his native Antilles, but much more the cities of France when his family moved from their tiny island off Guadeloupe in 1899. Perse was then eleven years old. At seventeen he wrote his first published poems, imagining Robinson Crusoe returned from his island to the civilised world and unhappy in it. His contrasts seem more amusing than the utterly humourless Perse intended. Sweat is beautiful on the shining bodies of the coloured people, but in the Old World everything is congealed and rancid. Crusoe explores his greasy mouth with his tongue as he sits in a greasy armchair; Man Friday steals and lifts the cook's skirts; the parrot falls sick. The life of these poems is in the memories of the island, soon to appear as Perse's own in "To Celebrate a Childhood" and "Praises", which were printed together with the "Pictures for Crusoe" under the collective title *Praises* in 1910.

These are not private appreciations of the picturesque but attempts to extract the essence of a quality of life common and patent to all who lived it. What stamps the impressions with an authenticity that Romantic exoticism never had is the constant shift from percept to sensibility and from sensibility back to perceptual notations so specific that we take their accuracy on trust. Mallarmé tried to express the idea of the flower not to be seen in any real bouquet; Perse gives us abutilons as "the yellow-spotted-black-purple-at-the-base flowers that are used for the diarrhoea of horned animals."[5] At the extreme the detail is not only observant but erudite. Curiosity is as poetic for Perse as sensuous beauty. When the field of knowledge and the special vocabulary extend far beyond the reader's range, as they often do in the later poems, the particular impressions can be blurred rather than focussed; hard work with a good dictionary is needed to get things clear, and not every reader is willing. One French critic accused Perse of making up names of non-existent birds.

When Leconte de Lisle wrote poems about the tropical island he was born in he remembered luxuriance and relaxing heat. Perse remembered light, people, particular kinds of human interchange, the mentality of the white planters and the coloured servants, vivid, animated details of the flora and fauna; above all, the sea, the surrounding element insinuating its sounds even into the child's sleep and bearing the boats that were the means of every adventure away from base.

CÉLESTE, IN PROUST'S novel, picked up a copy of *Praises* and asked Marcel if he was sure they were poems and not meant to be riddles. Marcel called them admirable but obscure. Compared with much of the poetry written since, including some of Perse's own, they are easy going. The perceptions are not linked in any narrative or descriptive unity—their unity is simply the general feel of life as Perse is trying to recapture it. The detail of the references may be hard to grasp, and the poet's private associations can come through only vaguely. But enough feeling is there to put Perse among the great recorders of the novelty and wonder of a world seen through a child's eyes, as well as of impressions we may still have as adults. Perse's brief picture of a horse[6] is like a Stubbs or a Munnings in words:

> *I loved a horse—who was he?—he looked me straight in the face, under his forelock.*
>
> *The quivering holes of his nostrils were two beautiful things to see—with that quivering hole that swells over each eye.*
>
> *When he had run, he sweated, which means to shine!—and under my child's knees I pressed moons on his flanks. . . .*
>
> *I loved a horse—who was he?—and sometimes (for animals know better the forces that praise us)*

[5] 37. ". . . les abutilons, ces fleurs jaunes-tachées-de-noir-pourpre-à-la-base que l'on emploie dans la diarrhée des bêtes à cornes. . . ." (36)

[6] 35. "J'ai aimé un cheval—qui était-ce?—il m'a bien regardé de face, sous ses mèches. / Les trous vivants de ses narines étaient deux choses belles à voir—avec ce trou vivant qui gonfle au-dessus de chaque oeil. / Quand il avait couru, il suait: c'est briller!—et j'ai pressé des lunes à ses flancs sous mes genoux d'enfant. . . . / J'ai aimé un cheval—qui était-ce?—et parfois (car une bête sait mieux quelles forces nous vantent) / il levait à ses dieux une tête d'airain: soufflante, sillonnée d'un pétiole de veines." (34)

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Snorting, he would lift to his gods a head of bronze, covered with a petiole of veins.

There are quite other images that prefigure Perse's later mythical vision of universal process, of life dying and becoming another kind of life, of a sort of cosmic cannibalism—"the wild honey of ants in the galleries of the dead tree",[7] the fruits that fall "without joy's rotting on our lips"[8], the trees "rotting at the far end of creeks of black wine."[9] Even the filth of this island paradise is seen as if with the eye of a painter transforming it into form and colour:

"the metallic splendour of the purple waters mottled with grease and urine, where soap weaves a spider's web." [10]

With the Old World it is very different:

"—The City like an abscess flows through the river to the sea." [11]

Pollution apart, what is wrong with these cities other than their failure to repeat the marvels of the child's world? Crusoe, in the last of his "pictures", is seen reading the Bible, wandering "among the prophecies", waiting for "the rising of the great wind that would suddenly tear you away, like the typhoon, parting the clouds before your waiting eyes."[12] Thirty years later Perse was to find his typhoon in the fall of France and be stirred to prophecy himself. In the meantime, "Anabasis" was a step back into primitivism in search of a myth to express his intuition of the human spirit. *Praises* appeared over his real name, Alexis Saint-Leger Leger. For "Anabasis" he adopted the pen-name of Saint-John Perse. This particular choice he never explained. From "Exile" onwards his readers knew who Perse was, but at the time of "Anabasis" the pseudonym put the poet into the same shadowy world as the poem itself.

For, though "Anabasis" was quickly appreciated by some, its readers were mostly, as far as one can see, poets themselves, and these confessed themselves baffled as well as engaged and intrigued. Almost impenetrable when it was published in 1924, it is still, after any number of attempts to interpret it, enigmatic in some of its parts. But the light thrown back by the later poems has confirmed the shrewder guesses at the general design and thrown a good many of its details into clear relief. Perse explained to Eliot that the title had nothing to do with Xenophon or the Greeks. It means "journey into the interior", real and spiritual, and its etymology brings in riding on horseback. Later, in an interview in 1960, Perse said of his own ride into the Gobi desert that what attracted him was "an animal, natural mode of life which, as always in the desert, is in touch with eternal things"; and, of "Anabasis", that its theme was "solitude within action; action among men as well as the action of the spirit; towards others as well as towards oneself. I wanted to bring together the synthesis, not passive but active, of human capability."[13]

ACTION, IN THE POEM, springs from the "dream, older than ourselves", the "idea pure as salt" which "revives the dead mouths of desire."[14] Water has to be found, and that, in the desert, means travel; beasts are needed to travel, and for beasts pasture must be found according to the chance of rainfall. A shadowy pattern of breeding and feeding, of journeying and conquest builds up; of the founding of communities, new dissatisfactions and more journeying and conquest; of pleasure found not in the pursuit of pleasure but in the slaking of natural thirsts. The poem is spoken by the leader of a community which remains indefinite until one of those enumerations of human occupations which were to be a characteristic feature of the later poems spells out "all conditions of men in their ways and manners"—what they eat or produce, buy or sell, work at or play at; the trivial mixed haphazardly with the useful. But the depth of the poem's feeling is not with these mediocrely human constituents of the cultural mix; it is with the leader's sense of his own leadership. In him the "idea" and the "dream" are vested by the mysterious passing Stranger. His outlook recalls the menfolk of the island in *Praises*, but he is also perhaps Perse's ideal image of himself; aloof with but above his people, possessed of the cosmic sense that gives depth to experience and identifying in solitude

[7] 59. "C'est le miel fauve des fourmis dans les galeries de l'arbre mort." (12)
[8] 25. "Aux lisières le fruit / pouvait choir / sans que la joie pourrît au rebord de nos lèvres." (25)
[9] 43. "... Des arbres pourrissaient au fond des criques de vin noir." (40)
[10] 49. "la splendeur des eaux pourpres lamées de graisses et d'urines, où trame le savon comme de la toile d'araignée." (45)
[11] 61. "—La Ville par le fleuve coule à la mer comme un abcès. ..." (13)
[12] 69. "tu promenais un doigt usé entre les prophéties, puis le regard fixé au large, tu attendais l'instant du départ, le lever du grand vent qui te descellerait d'un coup, comme un typhon, divisant les nuées devant l'attente de tes yeux." (20)
[13] My translation. "Ce qui m'attirait là-bas, c'était seulement un mode de vie animale et de vie de nature, qui touche aux choses éternelles, comme toujours au désert!" (575) "Anabase a pour objet le poème de la solitude dans l'action. Aussi bien l'action parmi les hommes que l'action de l'esprit; envers autrui comme envers soi-même. J'ai voulu rassembler la synthèse, non point passive mais active, de la ressource humaine." (576)
[14] 103. "songe, notre aînesse", "l'idée pure comme un sel" (93). 105. "J'aviverai du sel les bouches mortes du désir!" (93)

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with the stars looking down on the celebrations of community life. He knows the temptations of melancholy, and has to fight it in himself, together with the wrong kind of dreaming which runs away from action; melancholy in the people he leads is a capital crime.

There is no happiness but action and its impermanent goals, and happiness settles for a while when the goal is achieved. The opening song told of the birth of a foal and the first visit of the Stranger—the means of journeying and the spirit of the journeys; in the final song the Chief, finished for a time with cavalcades and conquest, whistles in satisfaction under a tree full of birds, knowing that no satisfaction is ever final: "There are no promises made to their banks that all these rivers keep."[15] There is no moving away from the vision of the first section, only the provisional reward of acting in accordance with it:

> *seekers of watercourses over the wrinkled rind of the world, O seekers, O finders of reasons to be up and be gone,*
>
> *you traffic not in a salt more strong than this, when at morning with omen of kingdoms and omen of dead waters swung high over the smokes of the world, the drums of exile waken on the marches*
>
> *Eternity yawning on the sands.*[16]

"ANABASIS" WAS PUBLISHED in 1924, with another poem of aristocratic leadership called "Friendship of the Prince." For a long time no more poetry appeared. 1940 added a personal reversal of fortune to the national disaster; dismissed from his post of high influence at the French Foreign Office by Paul Reynaud, Perse left Paris and, soon after, France. In London he stayed with Vansittart and visited Churchill at Chequers. He then went to the United States and accepted a job as consultant in French literature at the Library of Congress, on the understanding that his salary would not be a charge on the American budget. In 1942 he resisted pressure from De Gaulle, Churchill and Roosevelt to add his ability and prestige to the Free French effort in London; it had, he said, a

[15] My translation. Eliot (143) has "shall the rivers break faith with their banks?" for "il n'est promesses à leurs rives que tiennent tous ces fleuves." (117)

[16] 105. "ô chercheurs de points d'eau sur l'écorce du monde; ô chercheurs, ô trouveurs de raisons pour s'en aller ailleurs, / vous ne trafiquez pas d'un sel plus fort quand, au matin, dans un présage de royaumes et d'eaux mortes hautement suspendues sur les fumées du monde, les tambours de l'exil éveillent aux frontières / l'éternité qui bâille sur les sables." (94)

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political colouring, and this he could not condone. At first, in 1940, he seems to have rejected almost curtly the suggestion that he might return to writing poetry. He lived simply and found his diversions in riding, sailing and travel. But poetry reasserted itself. In the song at the end of "Anabasis", the leader refers to the poet, Leger to Perse: "But tidings there are of my brother the poet: once more he has written a song of great sweetness. And some there are who have knowledge thereof. . . ."[17] After 1940, instead of Perse subordinate to Leger we have Leger finding his way back to life as Perse, fighting in his poetry his sense of waste and desolation, overcoming the monster of cosmic futility that pursues "across the sands my Numidian soul. . . ."[18]

"Exile" (1942) begins outside the beach house Perse was lent by American friends on Long Beach Island. In loneliness and destitution the poet sees the sand under the fierce sun as a desert, a place "glaring and null as the bone-heap of the seasons."[19] "Anabasis" countered the sadness of the ephemeral with the confident sense of human function in a man who *was* functioning. Here, in "Exile", is a man without a place in the world wrestling with the nihilism that was always one of Perse's two "slopes" of consciousness. Poetry is again to find the "idea "of "Anabasis", the salt to "revive the dead mouths of desire"; but it is a very dead mouth that searches for the sources of poetic feeling in the desert of "Exile." Yet the poet is making some partial contact with his childhood in this archetypal situation of seashore and sun, birds, wind and sky: "Behold, I am restored to my native shore. . . . There is no history but the soul's, no ease but the soul's." The vision of a united, harmonious world was, in childhood, given; now it has to be striven for, starting again from base: "With the achene and the anopheles, with the culm and the sands, with the frailest things, with the idlest things, the simple thing, the simple thing of here, the simple thing of being here, as day drains away. . . ."[20] Once the soul has climbed back towards its precarious balance on the two slopes, the world can again be full of marvellously curious and beautiful things. In the sixth section there is a long list of "conditions of men in their ways and manners" like the enumeration of "Anabasis" but drawn from the real, contemporary world. All these are "princes of exile", with no need of the poet's song. The poem exhorts the poet: "Honour, O Prince, your exile." Perse's imagination is henceforward to explore the New World in the light of the spirit brought from the Old: "I shall resume my Numidian flight, skirting the inalienable sea. . . . No vervain on the lips, but still on the tongue, like a salty substance, this ferment of the old world."[21]

By the time of "Rains" (1943) the poet is near to accepting the catastrophe of war into his vision of the process of history. The cloudburst that set the poem going in his mind becomes a cosmic ablution of the human spirit, making trivial lives less trivial and responsible lives more high-mindedly responsible: "And you give us back, O Rains! to our human urgency, with the clay taste under our masks."[22] In this washing-away of all compromise and defection, Perse's "idea" appears in its purity: "And the Idea, stripped like a retiarius, combs its girl-like hair in the gardens of the people."[23]

"Snows" (1944) is the most intimate of Perse's poems and the nearest he gets to tenderness. "Exile" referred briefly to his mother and his mistress left behind in France. Now the snows, beautifully evoked as blanketing the whole continent, but blinding sailors and obliterating man's footsteps through time, bring thoughts of his mother abandoned in loneliness. Even these private and personal feelings are lifted to the high plane of the poet and become part of a ceremony of language, a ritualistic celebration of the poet's power to transcend the pains of living: "For our years are lands in tenure which no one holds in fief, but like a great *Ave* of grace on our path, there follows us afar the song of pure lineage; and for so long a time this agony of sweetness has kept vigil in us. . . ."[24]

"WINDS" (1945) is a poem of victory, but victory as challenge. The winds are

[17] 143. "Mais de mon frère le poète on a eu des nouvelles. Il a écrit une chose très douce. Et quelques-uns en eurent connaissance. . . ." (117)

[18] 151. "A la poursuite, sur les sables, de mon âme numide. . . ." (126)

[19] 147. "J'élis un lieu flagrant et nul comme l'ossuaire des saisons." (123)

[20] 157. "Me voici restitué à ma rive natale. . . . Il n'est d'histoire que de l'âme, il n'est d'aisance que de l'âme. / Avec l'achaine, l'anophèle, avec les chaumes et les sables, avec les choses les plus frêles, avec les choses les plus vaines, la simple chose, la simple chose que voilà, la simple chose d'être là, dans l'écoulement du jour. . . ." (130)

[21] 169. "Je reprendrai ma course de Numide, longeant la mer inaliénable. . . . Nulle verveine aux lèvres, mais sur la langue encore, comme un sel, ce ferment du vieux monde." (136)

[22] 183. "Et vous nous restituez, ô Pluies! à notre instance humaine, avec ce goût d'argile sous nos masques." (146)

[23] 175 (but with some words changed by me). "Et l'Idée nue comme un rétiaire peigne aux jardins du peuple sa crinière de fille." (141)

[24] 205. "Car nos années sont terres de mouvance dont nul ne tient le fief, mais comme un grand *Ave* de grâce sur nos pas nous suit au loin le chant de pur lignage; et il y a un si long temps que veille en nous cette affre de douceur. . . ." (161)

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the winds of change that have always blown but blow more fiercely now, destroying and freshening as in the past they wrecked some explorers and drove others forward. The poem ranges over a new world discovered and an old world changed by the voyages of the Renaissance. Now the recent war has swept away a whole cultural pattern; the nuclear age is about to begin, and the poem is to announce the spirit of man's new move forward: "All to be done again. All to be told again. And the scything glance to be swept across all man's heritage."[25] The poem ranges widely through space and time and its evocations of many different regions of the American continent colour accurate observations—not always easy for the reader to localise without help from American critics—with the poet's changing moods and the transforming power of his imagination. For the struggle in the poet's mind with the monster of "Exile" is still going on, until an encounter with a woman settles the issue: "Love, were you then in the right against the monsters of our fables?"[26]

The poem then turns to the poet's possible return to France, though it was to be some years before Perse went back and set up a second base in his own country. No others must reproach France, but the country's past needed the purifying winds of war. The indictment brings together all that French writers from the Romantics onwards had stigmatised as "bourgeois", but goes on to anathematise so many aspects of French life that one may wonder what can be left in the new France. Perse is taking on the sort of role that Wordsworth saw in Milton, and "the mire of dead leaves in Apollo's basin"[27] recalls the "fen of stagnant waters." "And the Poet is with you. His thoughts amongst you like watch-towers."[28] Not even Victor Hugo had more confidence in the power of the poet as prophet.

"Words", wrote Perse, "lose their meaning at the limit of felicity."[29] This carries a certain risk. There is no reason why the language of poetry should not be far removed from ordinary language and adopt a high tone when occasion demands. But a poet who maintains a consistently high tone and asks the reader to maintain his

[25] 239. "Tout à reprendre, Tout à redire. Et la faux du regard sur tout l'avoir menée!" (186)
[26] 323. "Amour, aviez-vous donc raison contre les monstres de nos fables?" (234)
[27] 347. "Et la boue de feuilles mortes au bassin d'Apollon"—a reference to the fountain at Versailles. (246)
[28] 351. "Et le poète est avec vous. Ses pensées parmi vous comme des tours de guet." (248)
[29] A literal translation of a fragment from *Oiseaux*. (417)

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consciousness throughout a long poem at the level at which he might respond simultaneously to a royal coronation and a state funeral runs a risk. Convention is against it, and anything that can be labelled as rhetorical is suspect. Perse's poems are, at the very least, great rhetorical achievements. The power of the feeling is maintained over long stretches, It is nevertheless uneven, and particularly in the long poems. Jouve wrote that Perse pours out all his treasures at once and continuously; they are not always the same kind of treasures. When the philosophical theme loses its deeper resonances the variations can hold our interest. The imagery, the range of specific references, the sonority, all these amount to a great variety of elaborations which can serve the main theme, generate their own kind of feeling in parenthesis, or please as decoration. The images themselves are of many kinds, ranging from the emotionally resonant to the precious, from easily graspable analogy to Surrealist shock. But there are passages, it seems to me, when the high tone rings hollow, when bathos is not far away; and the difficulty of reading is such that sheer weariness can cause the power to fail. The different parts of the poems are sequentially knit together by effective rhetorical devices—rhythm, sound, repetition of whole phrases with slight verbal changes from one instance to another—and have a kind of continuity with modulations that can be called musical; but there is little in the way of overall structure. Perse explained the structure of "Seamarks", but it is not easy to discern it without his help. "Anabasis" does have a shape, though the exact lines of it are still not entirely clear. The other poems seem to depend entirely on the course they run along no particular track and towards no particular goal.

Pese was more explicit about his intentions in "Seamarks" (*"Amers"*, 1957) than about any of his other poems. It was to be a supreme expression of man's thirst for the absolute and his exultation in the life-force. The setting is the sea conceived as the theatre of Greek drama; the poem is a choric ode in four parts: Invocation, Strophe, Chorus and Dedication. "Thus I aimed to take to the limit of human expression the secret vocation of man, at the very heart of action, for what in him transcends the temporal order."[30]

"Seamarks" seems to me the most successful of Perse's long poems. Though his aim was still what can be called a philosophical one, pushing his poetry to the limits of the human, his persistent, almost monotonously persistent, paradox of futility and purpose, or struggle between the two terms, is far less obtrusive. Whether or not the poem can be said to record Perse's final acceptance of cosmic flux, it does bring together everything he had ever felt about the sea, which was a great deal.[31] The sea, the overwhelming experience of sexual love briefly referred to in "Winds", and poetry itself are brought together here, and the poet's consciousness is totally surrendered to the experience of their fusion in a successfully sustained rhapsody which floats or submerges the reader's consciousness like music.

After "Seamarks", "Chronicle" and "Birds" are poems of total serenity. The first greets old age as fire rather than ashes and looks at death without fear. "Birds" was the result of an agreement to collaborate with Braque, though the poet and the lithographer worked separately on the project. Migration is now, for Perse, soaring as well as travelling. Whether or not he has any transmissible philosophical message for his readers, he has more than come to terms with his own life, and proved his point at least to the extent that through poetry he achieved his own personal serenity.

[30] My translation. Pléiade 571.
[31] See Kathleen Raive, "Saint-John Perse: Poet of the Marvellous", Encounter (October 1967).

Writers and their Background

Matthew Arnold

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Who Reads a Sociology Textbook?

Notes on a Growth Industry—By DONALD G. MACRAE

STUDY SOCIOLOGY, says the advertisement, and goes on: "You would study a number of themes, including the philosophical and historical background to *Marxism* and *Sociology*, the roots of *Racism* and *Sexism*, revolutionary movements and the dynamics of domination in Industrial Societies and the Third World." This sprat to catch the student mackerel is set by Middlesex Polytechnic, fishing to find candidates for its BA and BA Honours in Social Science. It sounds like satire, but is perfectly serious and was not composed by Mr Kingsley Amis; indeed it is another example of nature surpassing art at its own game.

Yet one ought to pause, and I, in particular must stop. I like Middlesex Polytechnic; I have lectured there; I was a governor of one of its constituent colleges; I am an examiner—though not in sociology—for the college; I supervise one of its teachers for the doctorate; and so on. Indeed I have a kind of need for the place, and as I drive up the Cambridge Road and swing off among Enfield's factories down mean streets to its major site I feel my crabbed and middle-aged heart lift a little. *More*, said Mr Amis long ago, about the growth of higher education, *means worse*. I do not think it has done so, but it has meant less in some ways and (as more should) more in others. Undoubtedly the quality of teachers, researchers, and scholars is on average less than twenty years ago. But the effect is a statistical one, and the reality is encouraging in that so much has been done for so many more and at so small a cost—so far. (Alas, the cost is rising, but that is not our concern here.)

What does concern us is one aspect of what has happened: the prevalence of higher education, particularly in sociology, has been accompanied by a dreadful prevalence of "textbooks." Textbooks for degree-level students did not exist twenty years ago for any subjects other than technology, medicine, law, economics, and some branches of science. In the arts and social sciences, works of *haute vulgarisation* were permissible if written by old men; but textbooks were anathema and, alas, American. Good teaching, good libraries, and the habit of reading were all that students and dons needed. A young academic could ruin a career by committing a textbook. Who could desire that the strenuously polymorphous and perverse business of serious education be forced into the straitjacket of a text? Who could accept the endistancing of the enquiring mind from the sources, the commentaries, the apparatus of true learning?

But now we have had the expansion of universities, the up-grading and creation of the polytechnics, and we are enjoying a disillusionment of government with the whole educational enterprise over which it has taken so much control. Two waves ran together in all this, the great wave of the new post-Robbins growth and the lesser crest of the unprecedented expansion of sociological studies in schools, colleges, universities; and thus, just like the Americans who pursued the idea of "a democratic intellect" from the 1870s onward, we cannot do without textbooks. I have five in front of me, genuinely random in that the publishers sent them and I had previously heard of only one (now radically updated) and a rumour of another.

ABOUT TEXTBOOKS I am in some ways an iconoclast, or at least very un-English. I have been collecting General Sociology texts for many years, not unselectively; and I own over thirty in English alone. They seem to me to have three interests. They declared the stock of orthodox knowledge at a given period; they forced writers to consolidate and logically to articulate their subjects if they could; they documented the attitudes of (usually) progressive social values. The second point is the most important for it actually is creative. At least three of the sociology texts from the United States of the last fifty years are real contributions to the subject; for a strong mind is wonderfully concentrated by the putting together of fragmented thought and knowledge in a way which will make sense to the best young minds. I suspect that this is true for all subjects, natural science included, and that our intellectual history will only properly be known when the textbooks are studied. (Is it true, as I have been

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told. that Max Planck wrote, and by doing so greatly advanced pure physics, a five-volume student text?)

But the level at which we start is not that of Max Planck. Mr John Scotson is writing for "O" and "A" Level students, nurses, policemen, etc.[1] Really he has done very well, but what it can all mean at "O" Level (or to an ambitious police officer, for that matter) I do not know. Perhaps that society is made up of "problems", and that a problem is something which interests the courts, the police, or the town hall. This is a depressing view of society and, analytically, a little thin. It also, despite Mr Scotson's accurate and clear references to social theory, does no justice to sociology as an intellectual activity, a form of knowledge, indeed a major form of contemporary self-consciousness, and as a critical activity. It is interesting in 1976 to find no clue to the existence of Talcott Parsons or Robert Merton. Implied is a picture of English society—three references to Norbert Elias and John Scotson's own researches —which, if I believed it at all, would lead to my hasty emigration. More seriously: at this level of aspiration, should the reader not be told more about how British society is articulated? I think so: one purpose of sociology is to help us to do better the ethnography of industrial society and I can think of children who might find this the most interesting and even practically helpful part of a course.

So I turned with hope to the textbook of Jack Nobbs, Bob Hine, and Margaret Flemming: *Sociology*[2] on the cover of which an English wedding, highly staged, grins out (or are the bride's grimacing family ranged on the left meant to register social shame and disapproval?). Here I am suitably awed. The book is prefaced by a stern encomium from a Mr Schofield who is Chief Examiner for GCE "O" Level sociology for the Associated Examination Board. Now I regard the "A" Level syllabus of that board as so pretentious and outrageous as to suggest diabolical inspiration. No one who has not read it could believe it. So Mr Schofield may be in touch with arcane powers. And Mr Nobbs is no doubt in touch with power, too, for he is a Justice of the Peace and author of half-a-dozen texts in economics. What is more there are diagrams (in red), photographs, cartoons and (remember Mr Nobbs is a J.P.) a summary account of English law courts and jails.

In fact there is quite a lot of rather formal, institutional ethnography of Britain here, and it is usually accurate. You would not learn much about sociology as an intellectual endeavour here, but you would discover something of its vocabulary and of its great names. (No, I don't recall a reference to Parsons or to Merton, but the index is bad and I can't be sure.) You would pick up a little social history and what I believe is called "civics." You would have to be very strong to read it all, for the authors have carried flatness to a new art form; prose like this could drive the young to drugs. Yet it is not positively misleading. As "welfare" is a major theme it might help the child round adult life, and though the treatment is sedative the fact that the economy is an element in social structure is not burked. Nevertheless Scotson wins.

After all one might question the need for British textbooks, and here is a bright new American one by J. Victor Baldridge.[3] Why should not the British student gain in knowledge and perspective from an American book? Mr Baldridge's volume is unlike either of the British texts in often using comparative ethnographic data to illustrate its analysis. Although the target aimed at is clearly the American college market—the author teaches at Stanford University—the intellectual difficulty is little greater than that to be found in the British books, and the writing is as good or better than that of Scotson. Certainly Baldridge could be used by "A" Level students as well as those in the first year of a degree. From a purely intellectual point of view the book is, as it ought to be, highly competent, so why not recommend it?

THERE ARE, I think, three reasons. There is the parochial point that British students like to feel that in arriving in a degree course they have put away childish things—and Baldridge's book is full of pictures (including a chastely and pastorally nude couple) and cartoons. More seriously, there are reasons why this American text, like so many in the last fifteen years, is so "very American." If one goes back to older books of similar aims—say MacIver & Page, Wilson & Kolb, or Bierstedt—they, of course, contained American presuppositions and data. Baldridge is better than the more recent books known to me in that he uses comparative ethnographic and historical data of a fruitfully wide-ranging kind. But he is a man of overwhelmingly American-centred culture, a man that is of the Imperial America of the last two decades, to whom America is the world and to whom the world exists only in the American mirror. This is very comprehensible; but it does make for a book that is alien in its assumptions,

[1] *Introducing Society: A Basic Introduction to Sociology with chapter guides to Further Reading and Examples of Examination Questions.* By JOHN SCOTSON. Routledge, £2.40.

[2] *Sociology.* By JACK NOBBS, BOB HINE AND MARGARET FLEMMING. Macmillan Education, £4.25.

[3] *Sociology: A Critical Approach to Power, Conflict and Change.* By J. VICTOR BALDRIDGE, John Wiley, £5.95.

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ideas, and data even to a student soaked in mid-Atlantic culture.

Paradoxically this is concerned with the third, most serious, and most interesting point about this book: it is predicated on a series of open but unexamined value-judgments. Here is an American college text from a firm famous for the publication of such texts, printed in double columns, cross-headed and trapped out with summaries and references—in its own terms a most professional job—which espouses the values of what was once the New Left (although that New Left is said on page 2 to have undergone "thrashing death-throws") in their "reformist, 'critical' perspective." Thus we read—the italics are Mr Baldridge's—that

> *the definition of vice is essentially a type of social conflict in which the older generation, the wealthy, the racial majorities and the powerful define as criminal, the poor, the minorities and the powerless, enforcing law against the behaviour that is quite legitimately accepted in those sub-groups.*

To which I can only say, Well, yes—and no—but also. . . . Certainly this is the documentation of "progressive social values" and a most useful repertory of them—longer, less complete, but more up-to-date than Flaubert's *Dictionaire des idées reçues*. Indeeed I commend Baldridge to the composer of the Middlesex Polytechnic advertisement for two reasons. Its values seem to be those of the advertiser; given these values, it is a highly competent, skilful and professional work. Secondly, as it is so very American, it can help to give British social indignation that endistancement from British reality which encourages utopian and inappeasable rage. But for others I can only recommend it for its virtues and its curiosity value.

Baldridge gives the sense of sociology as an intellectual endeavour—that is one of the virtues—but he takes, to reverse an old phrase, facts as disputable and values as certain. No doubt he does not defend this position, but it would be a contentious student who could tell that he does not. The remedy would be a sharp immersion in modern social philosophy—for an American, John Rawls and Robert Nozick are its interlinked poles. But social philosophy is no longer in fashion in British sociology departments.

How different my next and more specialised text.[4] This is an old (1955) book radically rewritten. It is candid (and "progressive") about its values and its policy proposals, but regards them as tentative; its tone is positive—an unfashionable

[4] W. B. Brookover and E. Z. Erickson, *Sociology of Education*. The Dorsey Press, $12.95.

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thing today—almost positivist. It is clear, and it is thorough. It is very American—as it hails from Michigan, most appropriately so—but it could be read with advantages as a text for its subject by any British student. It is long, over 400 pages, and not very exciting; still it is a craftsmanlike work with plenty of comparative references and it is within its limits, comprehensive. Some of these limits are odd. Recent work on educational programmes and the reduction of social immobility is difficult to square with the results of the Glass study of mobility in Britain in the early 1950s; but this is not mentioned. Anyone in Britain or America would be expected to look at what socio-linguistics tell us about education, social stratification, and control; they will not find it here. In the related areas of the determinants of movement and stability through education one is astonished not to encounter the work of Raymond Bondon or Anderson; but what is here is solid, and on subjects like "labelling" good and up-to-date.

What is not here is a radical look at what the "sociology of education" leaves out, and what the layman would most expect to find: a sociological analysis of the overt messages of education. This specialism since its birth has been concerned with media, with covert messages —especially of control—but not with the actual content of teaching. (What is grandly called the "sociology of the curriculum" is mere academic nitpicking and an effective basis for careers in meaningless research. It is *not* about curricula as social facts central to the culture. At least this book eschews this nonsense.) To ask for a study of the messages in educational sociology is to ask for that sort of novelty which only great textbooks, as I suggested above, provide. And this is not a great text, just a very good one in an old, honourable and useful American tradition.

WILLIAM SKIDMORE in *Theoretical Thinking in Sociology*[5] is part of a newer and also honourable tradition in textbooks, American or otherwise. This is the provision of books which deal in reasonable compass, critically and exegetically, with a single major topic at a level accessible to the undergraduate who has already reached a clear understanding of his subject. An excellent example, covering much the same ground as Skidmore, was Percy Cohen's *Modern Social Theory* published in the 1960s. Such books are (and Skidmore's is one) what I said of Cohen's when it first appeared: contributions to their own subject matter. What makes, and alone makes, Skidmore's book clearly a North American textbook is the provision of an apparatus of "*key concepts*", "*topics for discussion*", and "*essay questions.*" These however, can be ignored and *Theoretical Thinking* can be read as a book, not a mere text. It is, on that basis, a good one. It will also be useful, and is the only one of these volumes I would press on an educated. enquiring non-sociologist. The University of New Brunswick (where Skidmore works) and its students appear to be in luck; but that seems today a frequent commodity in Canadian education.The book is strictly theoretical: sociology as intellectual endeavour in its purest and one of its most important forms. That is to say, its theories are examined without reference to their historical formation or to their social contexts. There is a loss in this—as Middlesex Polytechnic would loudly claim—but a gain in clarity, in accessibility, and in the fact that this book clearly is not intended, like the other four, to be a compendium of all required knowledge at a certain level of instruction, but part of the continuing dialectic of knowledge and speculation. It is recognition of the most exciting aspect of knowledge, its continuing incompleteness and imperfection.

Its first three chapters are, inevitably, its least satisfactory ones. They concern the concept of theory, its taxonomy and its verification. They are unsatisfactory because the epistemological and methodological debates on these matters are in fact inadequate to the realities of actual theorising and are largely the domain of philosophers who do more to muddy than clarify discourse—I suspect through mere incapacity. But these issues must be looked at and admitted, even if it is not for sociologists *qua* sociologists to solve them. (The sign of disease in British sociology is the desire of every man to be his own, and very opaque, epistemologist.)

Thereafter, exchange theory, functionalism, symbolic interactionism, and ethno-methodology, all are given full, sympathetic exegesis and get treated with appropriate reserve and scepticism. As I suggested, Skidmore (like all good teachers) never forgets that the debate goes on. The account, for example, of Parsonianism—the "most vilified", as I recently heard it said, of all sociologies—is admirably clear, just, and capable of making people see the merits of that enormous endeavour in a hostile time. The account of ethno-methodology is not debunking but reductive and, again, justly clear. It will therefore win the author few friends on either side of that debate, which is as it should be.

So is the book perfect? Of course not. A great deal, especially of modern European sociology, is not here. I don't believe one can fully grasp either symbolic interactionism or ethno-method-

[5] *Theoretical Thinking in Sociology*. By WILLIAM SKIDMORE. Cambridge University Press, £5.50, $10.95.

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ology without a consideration of phenomenology as a doctrine and a programme—however little one may like it. The claims of modern Marxism as sociology, however one judges them, are not considered. Theories here are theories primarily of social structure, not culture. One could go on—and I would certainly want to do so about the Durkheimians and the now neglected Vilfredo Pareto (and what Lawrence Henderson made of him at Harvard)—but in a way all this is irrelevant. The author proudly claims that he is concerned to see that the reader is neither "smothered in detail, nor . . . insulted by superficiality." That is the aim of any good text; and he has succeeded.

I will urge my students—and as a teacher, that is the serious point—to read this book along with Percy Cohen's (oddly not mentioned), and in the historical perspective of Robert Nisbet's *The Sociological Tradition*. The good text is an incitement, and from Park and Burgess onwards many such were produced at a level of wide generality and intellectual concern. Perhaps that can no longer be achieved. But the newer tradition (to which William Skidmore's book belongs) suggests that at any level other than the quite legitimate one with which Scotson is concerned, it need not now be attempted.

The extension of higher education—and of commercial advantage—will, however, ensure that the attempt will continue to be made until the dons, and the libraries, and bookshops are better than they happen to be in 1976.

Untidy Reality

Edwardian Britain & the Tape-Recorder—By E. P. Hennock

As the process of social change has speeded up, so the reminiscences of ordinary people have become increasingly important to the historian. For what the elderly can remember most easily are the simple and common things of their youth, the food they ate and the tools they used, the routine of the household and the great events of the calendar. It is just these things that have been transformed most radically within the lifetime of those now in their eighties.

It is from this sense of a world lost for ever but not yet beyond the reach of memory that there has sprung the passionate devotion to the tape-recorder of the most experienced and successful exponents of the craft of oral history. Nowhere is this more strongly felt than in the country areas.

George Ewart Evans has been among the pioneers of that kind of interviewing in rural England. In his latest book he once more expounds the significance of what he sees himself as doing, adds more material to some of his favourite themes, and finally moves outward to explore the life and work of the Suffolk coast in relation to the herring industry.[1] He regards the replacement of the horse by the internal combustion engine as the biggest cultural break since the introduction of settled agricultural communities in neolithic times. In writing of a culture he has his eye on the way men plough their land, build their houses and make their tools, but he is also concerned with the whole range of matters that any anthropologist would include under the term, with the social relations, the norms and the spiritual perception of the world. In reconstructing a picture of rural England prior to the First World War and rescuing the knowledge preserved in the memory of the old, Evans has been spurred on by the belief that he is reaching much further back than merely into Edwardian times. He claims in fact to be recording a living tradition that has remained essentially unaltered since before the Romans came. Man's reliance on his own muscle power aided by that of animals he regards as the basic cultural fact, which improvements in tools or even the coming of Christianity could not have fundamentally affected.

Such claims are essentially unhistorical, not because it would have been impossible for some things to have survived over many centuries, but because so much else would have changed around them that the way in which they functioned and were perceived would not have remained the same. The magic practices and initiation rites that Evans has found among the horse-handlers of the later 19th century include some fragments that may well have been pre-Christian. What is much less clear is that such survivals played the same role or retained the same significance throughout the centuries.

[1] *The Days That We Have Seen*. By George Ewart Evans. Faber & Faber, £4.95.

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ONE DIFFICULTY about Evans's work is that he tends to overlook the innovations that had already been absorbed into the way of life that he describes, and which are essential to that way of life. Indeed much of what he tells us does not really support his thesis of an immemorial culture. He conveys a strong sense in his chapters on inns and pubs, on country childhood, and on the herring industry, of a way of life that has now passed for ever. But there is little awareness of the historical changes that had already taken place. One would never guess from what he tells us of the thriving herring-curing industry of Yarmouth that brought women down from Scotland by the train-load in the season to gut the fish that all this was itself the result of fairly recent technological innovation in the design of fishing craft. Vividly though Evans succeeds in creating a sense of the past, he does not convey a sense of history. The two are not the same, for it is just the relation between continuity and change that is the historian's prime concern.

IT IS CERTAINLY the dominant concern of *The Edwardians*, Paul Thompson's volume in the series *The History of British Society*.[2] This succeeds admirably in depicting British society poised at a particular moment in time. Thompson too refers to the survival in rural England of much of the old culture, of crafts, home-made wines, food and medicines, of superstitions, dialects, and canny observations of nature. He knows Evans's work, but he places these survivals in a countryside changed by the impact of new forms of transport that linked it with the towns, and in an agriculture that was part of the world economy. The life of the son of a rural labourer in North-east Essex, not far from Evans's own county of Suffolk, included train journeys to a seaside resort nearby, where he could earn 3d a day at that most untraditional of occupations, golf-caddying, while on other days he helped a thatcher with his craft. It is this interaction of the new with the old and the not-so-old that brings us closer to what rural life in Edwardian Britain was really like.

The point to remember about Edwardian Britain is surely that in some of the most fundamental respects the great gulf that separates our own world from the past had already been crossed, though only recently. The figures of births and deaths make that clear and are connected with the whole question of poverty. In most of the world the majority of the population were still struggling to provide themselves with a minimum subsistence for bare survival. In Britain after the needs for clothing, food and shelter had been met there existed a margin for comfort. By modern standards that margin was still very small for a significant section of the population, but men were no longer, as they had been for centuries, like people wading through a lake with the water reaching to their chin, so that every dip in the ground could drown them.

The poverty line, below which Seebohm Rowntree estimated 10% of the population of York to fall in 1899, was certainly harshly drawn, in that it excluded most of the minor social amenities of the time. It made no allowance for postage, newspapers and tram-fares. But it was generously drawn in terms of a food intake calculated to provide for physical efficiency, a concept that would have been quite alien to most of the world's poor, and that was pitched well above notions of mere subsistence. The significance of the various poverty surveys undertaken in Britain between 1886 and 1915 lies less in the actual figures produced, none of which are beyond dispute but rather in the concepts against which the population was being measured. After 1899 these were no longer concerned with individual physical survival but with national economic efficiency and with physical well-being. That the results should have shocked by demonstrating how much human potential was being wasted is less surprising than that this should have been the yardstick chosen in the first place.

COMPARED WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD, except for the USA, not merely was the British working class well off, so were the British poor. That is, however, not the dimension of inequality that interests Paul Thompson most, although he is aware of it. Working in the Sociology Department of Essex University, he brings to his historical studies the sort of questions with which British sociologists have now been concerned for quite some time. He charts what he calls the dimensions of inequality between the classes of Edwardian

[2] *The Edwardians: The Remaking of British Society*. By PAUL THOMPSON. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £10.

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Britain, as well as between the regions, the sexes and the age-groups. Much of this is illuminating and what he says of the family is particularly valuable and thoughtful. But in the end one is left with a sense of puzzlement. For the book is concerned as much with social change as with social structure. Whereas it is clear what changes there have been in the general level of comfort and how far-reaching the effects of these have been, it is not clear even after reading this book to what extent the inequalities of British life have been modified over the last 70 years. Thompson has read his Titmuss and his Atkinson; he is not prepared to believe that the available statistics of wealth or of income tell the true story. Paradoxically enough it is in an area where statistics have been less important than impressions that he speaks with the greatest certainty. He has no doubt that there has been a general blurring of class distinction since the end of the Edwardian age, and he is almost certainly correct. It is a change that he regards, oddly enough, as being as significant as the lifting of the majority of the population beyond the reach of destitution.

The author's devotion to the tape-recorder and the years that he has spent organising the gathering of reminiscences from those born between 1872 and 1906 provide him with a rich source of illustrations. In particular he illustrates the social class structure of Britain by means of 14 extensive childhood recollections, which range from the landed aristocracy to the poor, and from London to the Shetland Islands. They can be most vivid even when they illustrate such well-known scenarios as the lives of the North-of-England skilled working class or of the London ragamuffin poor. In one or two remarkable passages they move into unexplored territory and make one sit up and reconsider. The inclusion of Harriet Vincent, the half-caste girl from Cardiff's Tiger Bay, among the 14 examples was probably statistically not justified. But her father is the most memorable figure in the book. He was a West Indian ex-seaman who had lost a right hand, married a Welsh girl and ran a prosperous lodging-house for sailors. A nonconformist pillar of the community and Grand Master of a friendly society lodge, "he used to go to all the funerals. . . . When anyone died they'd come for him to head the funeral. . . . Used to wear his top hat and his coat, used to look well." That really does cut across the stereotypes and raise questions for further exploration, for which unfortunately this book provides no scope.

Thompson himself is most impressed by the household of a Shetland crofter with its very different social relations and child-rearing patterns from the rest of Britain. But in a book that has hardly anything to say about either mainland

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Foreword by Juliet Berry

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ROUTLEDGE

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Scotland or the Western Isles, and that explicitly excludes Ireland from its scope, he uses his example from the Shetlands primarily for its shock effect, not as a starting point for an investigation. Indeed the contrast that he makes, between the gentle upbringing of an only child in the croft of his grandparents, aunts and uncles, and the very different childhood in Essex of one of twelve children of an agricultural labourer hindered by bad health, may not be quite so straightforward a case as he suggests of rich, traditional community values *versus* cultural deprivation due to capitalist farming. We have been promised a further book based on the whole collection of recorded interviews. It is to be hoped that we shall hear more about these inadequately explored areas of the British social structure.

IT IS EXACTLY in this respect that the work of Raphael Samuel differs from what Thompson has so far achieved. In an attempt to be systematic, Thompson classified his informants according to the standard categories of the occupational census. Although on one occasion he referred to their recollections as representing the untidy reality upon which theoretical sociology ultimately rests, in practice it is the effort to categorise and tidy up that is dominant in his book. Just the opposite is true of the work of Raphael Samuel, who took his tape-recorder to what was once a village on the edge of Oxford. No one was ever able to classify the inhabitants of Headington Quarry according to the standard notions of occupation, and this is obviously the reason why he is drawn to them. " 'Quarry Roughs': Life and Labour in Headington Quarry, 1860–1920", the oral-history contribution to *Village Life and Labour*[3], is an original contribution of great value to our understanding of the social structure of Edwardian Britain. The fiercely independent life of this community is explored with patience and sympathy through a whole series of interviews with such survivors as Crowy Kerry, Waggle Ward and the descendants of Nobber Coppock and Mucky Gurl. Echoes from *Cold Comfort Farm* constantly occur in these pages in a most disconcerting way, and may perhaps explain why this sort of work has not been done before.

The secret of Headington Quarry's rough independence was a combination of ample land and ample multiple employment. Being a squatters' settlement on waste land, there was no house that did not have an ample garden rent-free for food-growing, pigs and poultry-rearing and the erection of wash-houses, workshops and sheds. Yet being within easy reach of a thriving university city, there was ample employment for the men in quarrying, brick-making and every kind of dealing as well as casual labouring work, and as much laundry work for the women as they could manage.

The "Quarry roughs", with their fierce lurcher dogs, their trespassing and poaching habits, their "totting" of wood or holly or briars and whatever else could be sold or eaten, may not easily fit our stereotype of suburbanites, but in essence what they enjoyed were the blessings of suburban life. Abundant land saved them from the hardships of high rent and overcrowded dwellings that characterised urban life, yet they could easily move in and out of the city where employment was to be found. Their means of transport was the horse, grazing for nothing on the rough grass of the surrounding common, over which the Quarry men preserved their somewhat dubious claims by means of judicious communal violence. This valuable asset when harnessed to a cart saved them from the hardship normal in isolated squatter villages.

[3] *Village Life and Labour*. Edited by RAPHAEL SAMUEL. History Workshop Series. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £6.95, paper £3.50.

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RAPHAEL SAMUEL IS A MASTER of the picturesque detail, but the whole hangs together and makes sense. A village in which the girls did not need to go into service to find work, in which the men had no employer any longer than they chose, and where there were no landlords, could afford to live without deference. And what Samuel with perhaps an excessive gesture of self-identification called the working-class bohemianism of the men was ultimately paid for by the drudgery of the women at the wash-tub, doing the white linen for the gentry in Oxford. Here is a corner of Edwardian England which we shall do well to add to our social map.

Raymond Aron's America

By Max Beloff

NOTHING that M. Raymond Aron writes can fail to interest, and at times to move, the reader. His is one of the most luminous intelligences of our time. For him the effort to understand the flow of contemporary events is the counterpart of a deep engagement with the disciplines of philosophy and sociology. While M. Aron's virtues are those often thought of as "French"—clarity of exposition first among them—he avoids what is often the bane of French writers on international questions, an unwillingness to see things in the round. If "fair play" were not so Anglo-Saxon a notion, one would say that it had been invented in order to describe M. Aron's personal sense of intellectual commitment.

The Americans have suffered a great defeat—when the French edition of his book[1] was published in 1973 the enormity of the defeat was still concealed—and even the preface to the American edition still envisaged President Nixon retaining office, although by then the shades of Watergate were closing in. Let us, implies M. Aron, not join in the general condemnation of US policy nor indulge in a *Schadenfreude* which ill becomes Europeans whose continent was first resuscitated and then protected for three decades by the enlightened self-interest of a generous America. Let us rather see why success and failure have been so closely juxtaposed, and above all why Americans find it so hard to accept the realities of their country's new position in the world, the inescapable burdens of hegemony.

> One cannot help wondering at times whether the American republic will ever attain maturity and whether it will at length realise that power implies rights and duties—limited rights and permanent duties. In twenty-five years the United States has perhaps not yet learned what it took the European states centuries to grasp.

What Raymond Aron has undertaken in this book is to answer the question of why the new position acquired by the United States as a result of the Second World War was used in the way it was: the logic behind the policy of Containment and subsequently Détente; the reasons which made the policy so much more successful in Europe than in Asia; the degree to which *raison d'état* has been modified or distorted by considerations of private profit; the extent to which the actions of the United States can be illuminated by any of the classic theories of imperialism. After a prologue in which he sets out the specific legacy of the United States' historical experience before 1945 and its contribution to enduring attitudes on the part of policy-makers and public, Aron treats the subject under two heads: (1) the United States as a member of the international states-system, a treatment of the classical political and strategic issues that the United States has faced over the last three decades; and (2) an assessment of the economic foundations of policy, the United States in the world market. A postscript gives reasons for M. Aron's view that while some admission that America's power to affect the course of history is limited has replaced what Denis Brogan called "the illusion of American omnipotence", and while the balance of concern has swung back to the domestic front, the challenge of America's great rival cannot and will not be ignored. The Soviet Union is the limiting factor where neo-isolationism is concerned:

> In match play the only way to become champion is to challenge the holder of the title. Not so in the inter-state tournament; here the title-holder must constantly put his title to the issue. The isolationist will prefer to sulk in his tent; the globalist will try to win every match. What tradition teaches is not cynicism but Aristotelian prudence—the supreme virtue in this world under the visited moon. . . .

[1] *The Imperial Republic: The United States and the World*, 1945–1973. By RAYMOND ARON. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £6.50

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Professor Aron's threefold treatment of the subject suffers from a certain schematism and occasionally from something like remoteness from the subject-matter of his discourse. The historical prologue is not without its errors. Although it is true that Hawaii did not become a state of the Union until 1959 it was annexed as early as 1898.[2] Much more serious is the rather typical weakness of the sociologist in discounting the effect of the constitional and administrative structure of the country concerned upon what actually happens. There is a good deal about the psychology of individual Presidents—Richard Nixon in particular—and of Henry Kissinger. There is also a good deal about the American people and its feelings and reactions, but very little about the actual mechanisms of the legislature, the departments and the parties that provide the instruments of the interaction between people and government. It is perhaps significant that when Aron does offer to explain the constitutional limitations upon the Presidency he confuses the role allotted to Congress as a whole with the particular prerogatives of the Senate.

It is also the case that M. Aron has very little to say about the implementation of United States policy in the field, and about the distinctive character of its executants or of the international organisations through which they largely operate. The relative neglect of the United Nations Organisation and of the implications for US policy of the desire to secure voting majorities there, well brought out in Mr William Buckley's recently published sardonic chronicle of his brief service as a US delegate, may not contradict M. Aron's preference for a realistic concentration on where power lies.[3] But when he writes in relation to the Middle East and South Asia of the "mutual paralysis of the super-powers in respect of their own clientèle", he could ask whether Détente has not meant that while the United States is paralysed at the United Nations —for instance in respect of human rights or "colonialism"—the same is not true at all of the Soviet Union.

In dealing with the relations between the United States and the third world, M. Aron tries to answer the question as to why the brilliant success of the Marshall Plan in Europe, or the rehabilitation of Japan, has had no counterpart where aid programmes are concerned, and more specifically why US policy has by and large been so unsuccessful in Latin America. No doubt his answer has the root of the matter in it:

> There is no common denominator for the *rehabilitation of developed economies*, weakened by war but richly endowed with all the human and social resources essential for growth, and the *modernisation of economies*, lacking technical expertise or petrified in traditional moulds.

But once again, the human factor on the American side from earnest protagonists of aid to the young enthusiasts of the Peace Corps does seem rather neglected.

It is perhaps inevitable that much of Raymond Aron's attention should be taken up with refuting false doctrine, with a polemic against misleading theories advanced in other quarters. Where global policy is concerned, his target is an American one: the "revisionist" school of the New Left, who by ignoring the substance of Soviet policy have managed to get themselves into the position of arguing that the "Cold War" was an American attempt to do down the Soviet Union, embarked upon before the end of World War II, with atomic blackmail as its weapon. Or there is the even less plausible version that Stalin was provoked into anti-Western moves by American "rudeness", a lack of concern for Soviet susceptibilities, as if this were more important to the Russians than the vast extension of their territorial domain in Eastern Europe to

[2] Also: William Hardy McNeill of the University of Chicago is not correctly described as an "English" historian.

[3] William F. Buckley, *United Nations Journal: A Delegate's Odyssey* (1975).

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which Roosevelt and Truman assented, and which despite talk of "rollback" was still further consolidated during the Eisenhower period.

ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE, M. Aron is largely concerned with the views held by some of his own countrymen (as well as some Americans) that the basic reason for the extension of American power globally has been the dynamics of American capitalism. Here the matter is much less straightforward. While it is true that foreign trade has continued to play a much less important part in the US economy than in the economies of the old "imperialists", it is true that there could be legitimate anxieties about the supply of some of the raw materials required to permit the domestic economy to run successfully. The development of the oil crisis since M. Aron finished his book has given cogency to some aspects of this argument.

In addition, as is true of course of earlier arguments about economic imperialism, there is the distinction between the interests of individual companies and those of the country viewed as a whole. And this problem is further complicated by the difficulties of following out the very complex, perhaps even at times internally conflicting interests of the great "Multinationals." But such questions lead us back in turn to the actualities of the American political process—to the balance, for instance, between the oil lobby and the Jewish lobby—and to how such balances may shift as circumstances alter.

Yet fundamentally the two lines of inquiry merge; and perhaps the sociologist has after all the last word against both the strategist and the economist. What differentiates the United States today from the period before its emergence on the world arena is that while it is still an expansive society, it is now one that cannot limit its expansionism to continental confines. It must find outlets for its economic energies and for its spiritual energies. It cannot tolerate the closing of markets to its goods or currency, and this may have political implications—what in the British context has been called the "imperialism of free trade."[4] On the other side, Americans cannot tolerate the permanent exclusion of their own ideas, social and political, and must, therefore, return again and again to the opening up of the frontiers—whatever temporary concessions Détente may have forced upon them last summer. It is possible to mock at rhetoric about the "free world" among the ruins of South-east Asia—it is always possible to mock American rhetoric. But it remains true that were the United States to disappear or be transformed into a xenophobic and isolationist fortress, the whole idea of a free world, the basic underpinning of Western civilisation might actually go under. Even neo-Gaullists might pause before wishing that on us. M. Aron at least is under no illusions.

[4] It is interesting in a writer with such a mastery of the English language and such a record of friendly associations with Britain that M. Aron never refers to a British thinker, or quotes a British book.

Home Thoughts

If I were to return now after
"an absence"? But while absent I have gained
too much presence. It's where I live.

I add years, change houses, keep
track of myself. I post letters to the past
and answers come, always up to date.

The generations are always catching up.
The tall historic houses will still be leaning
forward like runners waiting for the starting-gun.

It's dusk—but for a pin-hole in the clouds:
a ray of sunlight glares on an empty field.
Something I can't see is being interrogated.

Robin Fulton

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DISCUSSION

Philippe Ariès & "La Famille"

By Peter Laslett

ANY COMMENT on a piece by Philippe Ariès must start with a tribute to the man as a creative innovator and as a writer. *Centuries of Childhood* (1961) translated by Robert Baldick in 1962, is one of the original sources for what has come to be called in the United States "*the new history*", and perhaps more appropriately in this country "*historical sociology*." Original, imaginative, unexpected: novel in its sources, subtle and intriguing in its conclusions, always interesting to read, it is a body of work that well deserves the reputation it has acquired in the English- and the French-speaking worlds. In the short ENCOUNTER essay published last August Ariès sets out, with some modifications, the general thesis about the development of family over time put forward in his book with an illustration or two from the work of his follower Bouchard on a particular French village in the 18th century.

For all its brilliance and importance, however, *Centuries of Childhood* inevitably belongs to the intuitive/exploratory stage of this new intellectual activity. In this it resembles books like *The World We Have Lost* (first published in 1965 in this country), books which are inevitably subject to progressive revision as the study develops. But it differs from my own English study in abbreviated social description by its almost exclusive reliance on literary sources. If we try to compare the assertions which are made in the essay by Ariès with what is now being discovered about the history of the English family by the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, the contrast between what Ariès has laid down and what we have found out for England is at its strongest when it comes to evidence and to method.

WE MAY BEGIN WITH the crucial claim which Ariès quotes from Bouchard as to the duration of married life in the 18th century. Marriage at Sennely-sur-Sologne between the 1670s and the 1770s, he asserts, simply did not last long enough to be the basis for family life as the social scientists now think of it. The nearest Bouchard comes to a numerical statement of the brevity of marriage is when he says "it remains true that more than a half of the households were breached by the death of a spouse before the third birth."[1] To this Ariès himself adds—even more vaguely—that marriage seldom lasted more than twenty years. He uses this claim, along with a vivid illustration of how the circumstances affected a certain Jean Richard, to sanction his proposition that the family under the *ancien régime* was incapable of undertaking the socialisation of children. From there he proceeds to his even more important statement about the private family in the contemporary world being a novelty in history, which goes back no further than the late 18th century.

Given the spacing of births now known to have been characteristic of Western Europe[2] in pre-Industrial times, Bouchard's statement about Sennely between 1675 and 1779 implies that the average duration of marriage was only six years. But close numerical analysis of three English villages over a much longer period, that is from the mid-16th to the mid-19th century, shows a very different situation.

Faced with these English numbers it will be obvious that it would be difficult to accept at their face value the bold statements offered to us about the universal brevity of family life, and the consequent inefficacy of the family for all purposes, under the *ancien régime*. The people whose married lives are represented by the table lived with their spouses, with their first spouses, *on average* for 20 years. So far was it from being true that this number was "seldom exceeded" that a fifth or more of all these marriages lasted for 35 years or longer. This begins to approach the expected level of marriage duration in our own day.

[1] *Un village immobile* (Paris, 1972), p. 73. The tedious process known as family reconstitution, which is the only one which yields to the historical demographer actual distributions of durations of marriage, or the data on which it might be possible to calculate how long each child could expect to have both parents alive in the home, was not undertaken by Bouchard. It is impossible for his readers to be clear how he got his figures of births per family, and so to decide whether he will accept them.

[2] Say 12 months to the first birth and 2½ years between the first and second, second and third births.

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Duration of marriage in three English villages 1550–1849[3]

	Number of marriages	*Mean duration*	*Median duration*	*Lasting 35 years or more*
Colyton, Devonshire				
1550–1599	172	21.1 yrs	17 yrs	20.9%
1600–1649	257	23.4 yrs	22 yrs	19.5%
1650–1699	88	21.3 yrs	19 yrs	15.0%
1700–1749	126	20.8 yrs	17 yrs	21.4%
1750–1799	161	23.5 yrs	22 yrs	26.0%
1550–1849	870	21.7 yrs	20 yrs	20.3%
Hartland, Devonshire				
1550–1849	1005	25.3 yrs	20 yrs	30.0%
Aldenham, Hertfordshire				
c. 1580–*c.* 1810	301	28.8 yrs	25 yrs	37.0%

THE DETAILED ANALYSIS of these figures, an analysis which it will not be expected that I lay out in full here, shows that there might nevertheless have been no really important structural difference between these three English villages and the village of Sennely. Sennely in the 18th century could represent an extreme instance of an adverse situation for family life, while Aldenham was in the opposite position at all times for which we have knowledge. Conditions in that Hertfordshire village may have been peculiarly favourable for a long period of association between parents and their infants. For the first step in dealing with evidence and issues of this kind is to recognise that small communities inevitably vary from each other, and that the variation can be quite wide without necessarily meaning a great deal. In the English villages, and indeed in all the evidence we have so far assembled for England, it seems very unlikely that more than a small minority of marriages were broken before the birth of the third child, which is what happened according to Bouchard to half the unions at Sennely. But we have as yet no way of knowing whether there was a *significant* difference between this French example and the three English ones.

It is simply not justifiable to take a quantitative impression from one period in the development of one French village and to refer to it as if it represented the Family under the *ancien régime* in France, and perhaps everywhere else in Europe. Making half-numerical statements of the kind I have quoted is decidedly not to be recommended. In fact the use of general impressions derived from literary evidence, to make an implied numerical statement which is backed up by an attractive typical instance, has too often characterised the work of conventional historians in all fields. The insufficiency of these methods is one of the points of sharp debate between the "new history" and traditional historical analysis.[4]

IN SO FAR AS IT RESTS ON EVIDENCE of this kind, therefore, the position of Philippe Ariès about the development of the family over time must be pronounced not proven. Like many of the other statements made here and in *Centuries of Childhood* these claims carry conviction from inside themselves, so to speak, in so far as they convince at all, for they cannot always or even often be checked from outside themselves. Nevertheless it must be freely admitted that much of what Ariès claims does persuade his reader, and that some part of it at least can be confirmed from numerical evidence collected in England and in other countries. It is entirely right in my view to maintain that the distorted picture of ourselves which synchronic social science has brought about now requires the therapeutic intervention of the historian, or of the historian as sociologist. We do not understand ourselves because we do not know what we have been, and hence what we may be becoming.

When Ariès insists that the outstanding characteristic of our personal and social lives is the separation of work-place and living-place, he is giving an historical dimension to a major truth about the Industrial era. He is also justified in brushing aside the once traditional assumption that the family group was always considerable in size and complex in its structure in the past. This is to confirm a principle which has already been demonstrated numerically, in so far as that is yet possible, for our own country, where we have now assembled and analysed the largest body of materials about the size and structure of the household.[5] It may be noted, however, that this is a principle which is now coming under

[3] Figures from "family reconstitutions" now in progress at the Cambridge Group, consistent with those found for the four or five other places also being worked on in this way. For the details of this process see the publications of the Group, a list of which is available by application to 27 Trumpington Street, Cambridge. Neither Ariès nor Bouchard refers to figures of this kind for the duration of marriage, though they are available from reconstitutions of French parishes carried out by the distinguished French demographer Louis Henry, who perfected this process, and his pupils. Their figures for the duration of marriage are of the same order as those printed above though certainly somewhat lower.

[4] It is sad to see Edward Shorter perpetuating and compounding exactly the same error—taking the entirely unsatisfactory figures for marriage duration from Bouchard and claiming that in traditional times marriage lasted for five or ten years—in his stimulating but wildly erratic book, *The Making of the Modern Family* (New York, Basic Books, to be published by Collins later this year). Worse still was to hear Professor Laurence Stone repeating the fallacy, rather a long way after Ariès and Bouchard by now, in his Trevelyan Lectures on the history of the English family delivered in Cambridge in November. This is no way to go about a new intellectual pursuit.

[5] See the collective work, *Household and Family in Past Time* (1972), now also issued in paperback by Cambridge University Press.

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debate in the case of France, a country which was probably not as homogeneous as England as to family structure in earlier times, and where complex family households certainly existed in larger quantities in some areas than they did anywhere in England, if on nothing like the scale assumed by earlier writers.

When citing Bouchard to impress us with the brevity of life and the consequence of family relationships, Ariès is also certainly right, though he may exaggerate the effect by overlooking the fact that life expectation at later ages, at child-rearing ages, was relatively high. Recent Cambridge research on orphanage certainly shows how frequently loss of parents took place. It seems (when the evidence is presented numerically, and with the required confession as to its high degree of uncertainty and variability) that a quarter or even more of all "children" were usually orphaned in the traditional village under the *ancien régime*, both in France and in England; that well over half of all brides had lost their father or their mother at the time of marriage; that a good tenth of all children under six years old were in that circumstance. All this in spite of the figures for the duration of marriage.[6]

THE SENTIMENTAL PICTURE of large, stable, multi-generational kin-enfolding, welfare- and stability-providing family life in a bygone world which was such a contrast to our own impoverished family existence—this is a dangerous illusion. Moreover it is very likely to be true (as Ariès rightly stresses) that the privacy of the family, indeed privacy within the family, is a very recent affair, and that there have been some fascinating class differences. It seems probable that the family in England, in France, and everywhere else in the West was far less enclosed within the four walls of its dwelling than it is today, or was in Victorian times.

The large, prosperous, aristocratic or bourgeois household was a public affair under the *ancien régime*, because it discharged public functions. The smaller, minutely accommodated, miserably sustained household of the humble mass of the people simply could not provide the space to its members in which they could do what can now be done in the roomier and infinitely more comfortable working-class dwellings of an Industrial age. It follows that when the public functions of the great households ceased, because they were taken over by other institutions, family life for the privileged became more private. It follows too that the working mass did not attain to familial privacy till much later. Their children lived in the streets, and they themselves spent much of their time outside their uncomfortable hovels, until the day arrived when the rise in resources available to ordinary people enabled them to live within the privacy of their own families—as the privileged had always been able to do, if they chose. This did not begin to happen on a wide scale until our own day. The "privatisation" (appalling word) of the working-class family is now one of the favoured topics of the sociologist.

It may also follow, indeed it must to some extent, that the socialisation of children did not go forward exclusively within a close-knit group of father, mother, brother, sister and baby as it does in the contemporary family. It is possible—but in my view no more than probable[7]—that something like the "*milieu*" of Ariès and Bouchard may have been an agency in the socialisation process. But beyond this point it seems to me not justifiable to follow the thesis which Ariès has sketched.

NOT ONLY IS IT IMPOSSIBLE to demonstrate that for most children most of the time under the *ancien régime* the marriage of their parents was too brief for primary socialisation to take place, it is also a rather unlikely claim that primary socialisation can take place in any other way. It is by interacting with its earliest attachment figure, and this must usually be the parent and primarily the mother, that the infant undergoes the process of early social maturation. This is the period when the greatest part of the whole

[6] Once more the reconciliation of these two circumstances requires an overall numerical understanding of the process at issue. For the facts cited above, see my article in the No 13, Autumn 1974 issue of *Local Population Studies*, chapter 4 of my book, *Family Life and Illicit Love in Earlier Generations*, forthcoming from Cambridge University Press. "Children" here are defined as all unmarried offspring irrespective of age resident with their parents; and "orphanhood" as being the loss of one parent, in the vast majority of cases the father. The loss of both parents was surprisingly infrequent. The conclusion of this study, that "broken families" are probably no commoner now than they were in traditional peasant society, at least in the West, is of some interest to the general theme drawn out here.

[7] No more than probable because we have not yet been able to show that connections with kinfolk, living in the same village or elsewhere, were in fact always stronger in traditional villages than they are today. There are indications that kin linkages in the modern suburb, working-class or middle-class, may be as numerous and even as effective when it comes to crises in family life. Certainly connections with geographically distant kin are better maintained than they were in traditional times, and these people are often important when the upbringing of children has to be patched up. As for neighbourly relations, there are persuasive signs that they must have been stronger and more important then than they are now. But we have not yet convincingly demonstrated how far and in what ways this affected child-rearing.

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business of becoming a person takes place, and it is over by the third year, or at least by the fifth year of life. If a child loses its father during that time, then the process is disturbed. If the mother herself dies then the effect is far more serious. The business of early maturation is impoverished no doubt, but it goes on nevertheless. To assert that under the *ancien régime* the family "had no socialisation function" is quite unacceptable.

This process of socialisation is not necessarily as badly interrupted by the death of a parent, even of the mother, as perhaps might be supposed. In any case remarriage could repair it, and Bouchard himself insists that remarriage was frequent.[8] Primary socialisation, moreover, is not the whole process of growing up, and here Ariès and Bouchard seem to falter again. Although you did very often have to leave your family of origin when very young in the traditional world, even occasionally before the age of ten, you did so in order to join another family (or, rather, household), that of a master to whom you became a servant. It was there, as a member of a larger and probably more enduring household or series of households, that the rest of your upbringing occurred, your "secondary socialisation." The *milieu*, if it could be properly defined, might well turn out to have played a part in all this, but the household of the master must have been the predominant influence. The brief reference to apprenticeship by Ariès in no way covers this whole highly important process.

WHICH BRINGS US to the size of the traditional household and its effectiveness as a unit of the social structure. In every publication issued from *The World We Have Lost* onwards, our group in Cambridge has insisted that most persons lived in large domestic groups, and by large we mean six people and above, in spite of the fact that the mean size of the household was surprisingly small ($4\frac{1}{2}$ or $4\frac{3}{4}$ persons). This came about because of the exchange of young persons as servants between the poorer, smaller domestic groups, and the richer, larger ones. In this way it seems to me that the family under the *ancien régime* did have a way of ensuring the bringing within a family circle of every person not yet adult, even though the process involved change from household to household and did not always go on after the earlier years as between biological parents and their children. The household could and did maintain its function of giving structure to the community even if, as at Sennely, the community was often poor, wretched, and subject to perpetual impermanence. All pre-Industrial communities are like this, to varying degrees.

THIS IS ONLY A SKETCH of a rather different view on these topics which raise issues still for the most part entirely unsettled. There is, for example, the actual reality, the tangible quality of community life in earlier towns or villages which is puzzling and difficult, and only too susceptible to sentimentalisation. People seem to want to believe that there was a time when everyone belonged to an active, supportive local society, providing a palpable framework for everyday life. But we find that the phenomenon itself and its passing—if that is what, in fact, has happened—perpetually elude our grasp. To re-name this sense of community the *milieu*, as Ariès seems to do, and to deplore its disappearance as if that were a singular event which has demonstrably happened over the length and breadth of Europe, seems to me to be simplistic.

The great emotional bonding of the family group is that between sexually active married persons and that between them and their young children. In the former world a high proportion of men and women, boys and girls, were living within this multi-bonded framework and every individual spent much of his life there. Older people, then as now, often lived outside this intense complex of emotional relationships. But the time between the departure of the last-born child from the household and the death of the parents was then much briefer. All this is now absolutely transformed, as Ariès himself argues. The late 20th-century Englishwoman and Frenchwoman marries in her early twenties, has her two or occasionally three children by the age of thirty: puts them to school when they reach the age of five, six or seven: and loses their company when she is in the early or middle forties, with thirty years and more still to live.

What goes for her goes for her husband too, though in somewhat more complicated ways. The family considered as a period of life has shrunk alarmingly. Where it used to be as all-embracing as a flannel nightgown, it has become as scanty as a bikini or a pair of bathing trunks. This is the version of the great transformation which Philippe Ariès seems to be describing in his final paragraph and which I should favour. But both of us should freely recognise that by 1976 the days of bold and easy generalisations are over in this fascinating field.

[8] For the revised view that child development does not require uninterrupted dependence on a parental figure (nearly always the biological mother), as it seems to do in the work of Bowlby and others, see M. G. M. Richards, *The Integration of the Child into a Social World* (Cambridge, 1974).

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MEMOIR

Kurt Hahn, Educator

By Golo Mann

IT WAS IN December 1922, as I trudged across snow-covered fields, that I first saw the walls of Schloss Salem. As we approached the front of the huge monastery a still youthful, tall, rather heavily built man came towards us vigorously swinging his arms. He was accompanied by two ladies. The greeting was brief; Kurt Hahn and my mother had known one another since childhood. Unfortunately he had no time at the moment: he had to buy a cow for the school. Then, in some embarrassment: "Shall I be seeing you?" "Well, Herr Hahn, I'm not here for any other purpose." It proved to be a difficult purpose to fulfil, both that day and the next. As we waited patiently at the *Gasthof Zum Schwan* messages came thick and fast. Herr Hahn was just taking a class; Herr Hahn was playing hockey; Herr Hahn was looking after a sick pupil. . . . On the evening of the second day he came. The conversation was brief, but had the desired effect of enabling me to come back after Easter as a pupil at the boarding school that had been established two years earlier. This was the beginning of a relationship that lasted for fifty-two years.

He was the most helpful, most generous man I have ever known, rich in ideas and rich in the energy and cunning required to put them into effect. Things were not easy for him: as a Jew in an initially discreetly, then ever more brutally anti-Semitic society; as a man who was ailing by nature and also acquainted with psychic depressions, but who loved health and wished to lead others to health; as a "Christian gentleman" among pagans. Not even the bitterest experiences were able to break his good will.

KURT HAHN *died on 14 December 1974 at the age of 88.*

GOLO MANN, *the distinguished German historian, was a pupil of his in the Schloss Salem School.*

ROBERT SKIDELSKY *is the author of a critique of English Progressive Schools (Penguin 1969).*

He was a born teacher, a born moulder of men, who worked with passion and intuition—unlearned, despite classical studies at Göttingen and Oxford—an educator of youth and a fiery adviser of adults. Of the latter, Prince Max of Baden is the most striking example. During the years 1917–18 Hahn considered it his prime task to make this noble and insightful man who, however, lacked self-confidence, useful to the nation, to persuade him to accept great responsibility; meanwhile, although he was merely a young man in the *Landsturm* with no political position, he worked with unbelievable adroitness to have Prince Max appointed *Reichskanzler* and finally succeeded; succeeded too late. Thereupon the two of them founded the Schloss Salem school, the first of the now almost countless schools and colleges, spread over five continents, directly or indirectly derived from Kurt Hahn's creative ingenuity. The measure of good that came out of these foundations is impossible to gauge. And they would have slipped out of the founder's hold if they had not been the work of pupils or pupils' pupils. To find such people and persuade them to act was one of Hahn's basic talents, as was his ability always to raise money for his purposes when he had given his own away or lost it in the turmoil of the times.

NOT THAT HIS TEACHING METHODS were free from weaknesses. They lacked a certain element of discretion, and it was so easy for his pupils to know what was wanted of them. They placed too much emphasis—in this Hahn was still an admirer of the British Empire—on will-power, or on education to will-power. Hahn was very fond of Kipling's "If"—a magnificent, rather awful poem. A few other serious objections could be raised.

Nevertheless Hahn was a pioneer. He could have said of many of the innovations of recent years that they were not new to him. Thus the Kurt Hahn schools were pretty well able to survive the "cultural revolution." Despite profound changes, more than a trace of the old substance was left, without the young realising it. Mutual self-education of those growing to maturity, though with guidance from their elders. Living by one's own rules, pupils' democracy. Liberation of dormant talents and longings by providing opportunities for their expression. Joy, joy above all in common pursuits, technical services, sport, theatre, responsibilities and duties—all this accompanied by a close link between educational and political principles: the school as a political entity. To educate is to convince the individual that both he himself and the others are potentially helpful, reasonable, and good, if approached properly. Hostility is

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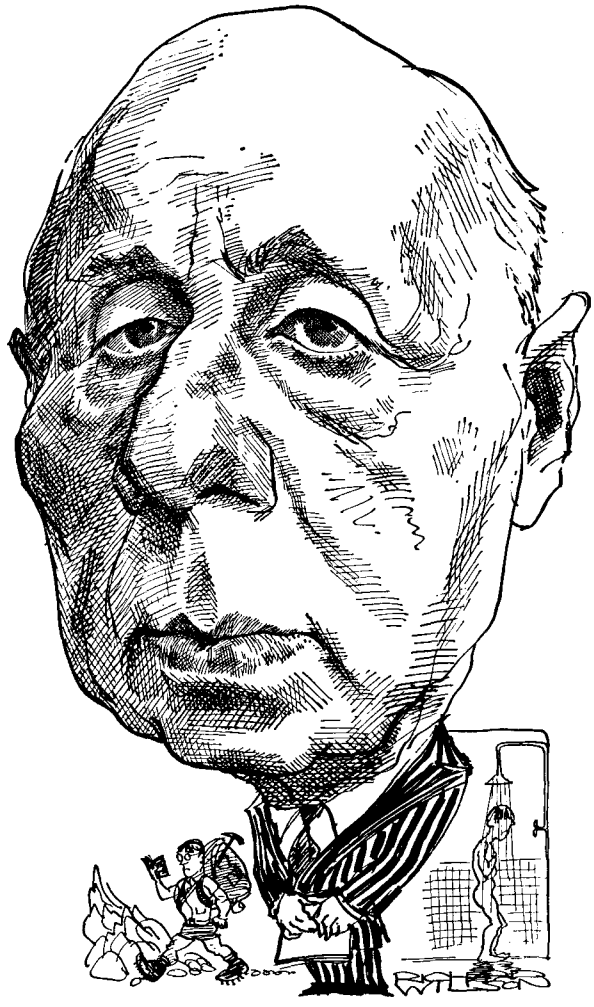
stupidity, misunderstanding, an evil spell. Mendacity doesn't pay. Power, when it creatively outstrips one's own identity, does not turn into self-seeking and boastfulness.

This was Hahn's optimism, his pragmatism of a type that was more American than British. Man is not rigidly predetermined, but becomes what he does; therefore he must be guided into the good, the socially useful. Even his aggressive instincts can be directed into fruitful channels—no wonder that Konrad Lorenz, the author of the book *Das sogenannte Böse* (*On Aggression*), likes quoting Kurt Hahn.



Hahn himself was an enthusiastic quoter: Plato, who forever remained his teacher; William James; the statesmen and orators of Victorian England (Palmerston, Gladstone, *et al.*). He loved England while he was still a young German; he learned a great deal from the English and was no enemy of "the Anglo-Saxons" during the First World War, as he was no enemy of Germany during the Second and no enemy of Russia in the Cold War. He evinced his unbending will to the positive over and over again. In 1917 he was an opponent of Lloyd George and sought to help the "reasonable men", Grey, Asquith, Lansdowne. At the same time he was an enemy of the insane German war aims, of the Pan-Germans and General Ludendorff, and sought to aid the weak advocates of a negotiated peace in Germany. He hated Hitler, if anyone did, and yet believed in a "better Germany", in Christians, Conservatives, Socialists with whom contact ought to be established, and his attitude was still the same during the Cold War. He regarded a fight to the bitter end as stupid, and despair as impractical and immoral. In principle, I can find nothing to object to in this. Even if he often considered people and powers better than they were—why not try to come to terms with them in spite of everything? Ultimately, little is risked by so doing.

THE RANGE OF HAHN'S pedagogic writings is narrow, their content not over-impressive. He was no theorist. His success depended entirely upon his presence; it is scarcely possible in this context to avoid the banal expression "power of the personality." He felt this and seemed to me to be trying to moderate rather than intensify the effect of his eloquence. In general, he would try to draw back as soon as he felt that his influence on the young people entrusted to his care might become too strong, too direct.

I shall never forget his teaching of Latin, the way he presided over athletic contests, his improvised story-telling in which the stories generally had an English public school as their background. I shall never forget his care for each individual child, especially for those most vulnerable.

His political writings are incomparably more extensive. Politics and the word go hand in hand, and Hahn was what is called a master of the word. *His* writings—there's the rub. To a great extent they are not his; they do not appear over his name. They are memoranda he wrote for other people, speeches composed for others. The others took what he gave and took the credit, a field in which the German Foreign Minister of 1919, Brockdorff-Rantzau, went rather far. But Hahn's style, his way of thinking, is unmistak-

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able. Prince Max's *Memoirs*, a joint work, despite all the shortcomings due to the time and circumstances in which they were written, remain a compendium of political wisdom. They also contain many of Hahn's letters, especially a number concerning the "negotiated peace" which he had adumbrated. One of them states that to counter secret diplomacy—the dishonest would-be crafty concealment of one's own purposes—"negotiations will be preceded by a public discussion that will, so to speak, already disclose the basis for an understanding and make it so clear to the peoples that public opinion in the warring countries will press for an attempt to overcome the remaining differences by diplomatic negotiations. . . . " I wish Israel had taken the truth of this maxim to heart between 1967 and 1973. The Swabian democrat Conrad Haussmann, one of the few clear-sighted politicians of that day, wrote in 1917 of "Kurt Hahn, whose phenomenal intelligence and practical political idealism have been very active and very useful to me of recent weeks . . . ." The characterisation is apt. Hahn himself was very fond of the expression "artful idealist" (in German it was "*geriebener Idealist*")—not to be applied to himself, of course.

IF AMBITION MEANS getting things done, he was ambitious; if it means striving for outward recognition, he was the opposite. At most, he accepted the fame that came to him late because it was useful to him in his work.

His end was sad. When he could no longer act, no longer help, he became helpless in the face of his own suffering. By and large one can say that he was as happy as a man of his constitution can be, happy despite all the hardships life imposed upon him; and astonishingly successful. People are not so good, and their badness is not so much a matter of misunderstanding and being misled, as this disciple of Socrates believed. Nor are they so bad (many of them, I am not sure whether I can say most of them) that they failed to recognise the man who meant well by them.

A Respectful Farewell

By Robert Skidelsky

I FIRST MET Kurt Hahn early in 1966. I was at Oxford at the time and had just started work on a book on Progressive Education. I wrote to Hahn and received a reply from Salem saying he would come to Oxford, since he often stayed near there. One afternoon in February he showed up. At seventy-nine, he was still a big man. Two things in particular struck me about his appearance. The first was his completely unlined face, pink like a child's. The second was the hat he was wearing, black, and with a very wide rim. He explained that he wore it against the sun, and I then learnt that Gordonstoun owes its location, and possibly its conception, to a sunstroke Hahn suffered at eighteen, in Berlin, shortly before taking his *Abitur*. This forced him, when he later came over to study at Oxford, to spend the summer months in the cooler, bracing, climate of Morayshire. A second sunstroke forced him to give up the headmastership of Gordonstoun in 1953.

Talking about education to Kurt Hahn was difficult owing to his conversational method which consisted almost exclusively of Aphorisms and Great Sayings illustrated by Concrete Examples—a method which produced, as it was no doubt intended to, an appreciative silence. I later became more familiar with it from his writings, mainly privately published addresses to various meetings, of which he left me a pile, and sent more. It conferred on his ideas a certain invulnerability, since it was difficult to oppose them by the normal method of argument. His authority was personal, rather than intellectual.

We had tea, and he left as it grew dark, very courteous, anxious that he had taken up so much of my time, perhaps already recasting our conversation to provide a concrete example of the diseases of modern society. I was unhappily aware that I had probably been consigned to one of his four categories of modern "youth" (with Hahn an elastic concept). He could not think me "lawless", and I had not been "angry." Had I perhaps appeared "listless?" On the whole, I felt that "honourable sceptic" suited me best.

Shortly afterwards, I visited Gordonstoun, where I spent several days shivering (despite long trousers). The headmaster and his wife were sincere and charming, as was everyone I met there; and it seemed positively dishonourable to remain a sceptic, amidst so much evident sincerity and enthusiasm. And yet . . . "Where adolescent

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males are concentrated in isolated communities the temptations of puberty often become irresistible . . . " Kurt Hahn had written in 1938. Then why bring them at considerable expense to one of the remotest spots in the British Isles I wondered? It was difficult to take all his talk about the poisonous and the non-poisonous passions entirely seriously. As far as I could make out, the boys of Gordonstoun appeared to display little passion of either variety.

There was another cause for scepticism. Hahn, like his great rival, A. S. Neill, aimed to establish a universal model of education. In practice, both found themselves catering for the special needs of special groups. Summerhill came to be filled with disturbed children—mainly American. Gordonstoun became the choice of parents whose sons were not quite clever enough to get into Eton. Did Gordonstoun, any more than Summerhill, have anything to say to the majority of Britain's schoolchildren?

AFTER ONE MORE VISIT—to Atlantic College, Glamorgan, first of a network of international sixth-form schools inspired by Hahn's ideas—my chapters on Kurt Hahn were ready, and duly dispatched to him for comment. The first, very bulky, letter arrived on 4 September 1967. It started:

> "If asked to sum up the essence of your condemnation directed against my political and educational work, I feel inclined to recall an episode which Paul Johnson related in the *New Statesman* of 17 March 1961. He told an economist friend, "a man of pronounced left-wing views", of his experience on a mountaineering course—how he overcame his fears and how elated he was when he defeated his defeatism. His friend had only one thing to say: "You bloody Fascist."
>
> You use much more courteous language—so did Mark Antony in his funeral speech—but this is what I feel you firmly believe."

There followed a 24-page defence of his political activities, and this was followed by 19 pages (spread over several letters) on his educational activities. This outpouring revealed another aspect of Hahn's personality: his thoroughness. I suggested earlier that he did not much enjoy argument. He was, however, a firm believer in meticulous documentation, or (in Hahnese) "the ability to give precise evidence." He was, in fact, a very persuasive combination of visionary and technocrat.

READING THROUGH our correspondence today, I realise how unprepared I then was to cope with the Kurt Hahn phenomenon. To prevent myself from being engulfed by his moral certainties I found myself writing much more critically than I felt. In particular I failed to resist the temptation to poke fun at the Great Man and his absurdities. Although I did not knowingly utter an untruth, the effect of what I wrote was subtly distorting; the account was also emotionally incoherent. Hahn was kind enough to say that my "genuine misunderstandings" were "a help and a challenge to get on with the job of writing a kind of educational testament." Since, as far as I know, this has never appeared, the following further misunderstandings will have to do service for the time being.

HAHN'S CHIEF EDUCATIONAL AIM was to prevent what he called the "deformities of puberty" from which, in his view, most young people never recovered. These were: irritability, apathy, and lack of physical and mental co-ordination. Most people associated them with physiological changes. Hahn regarded it as his mission to unseat this dogma. The deformities of puberty, he insisted, were cultural, and were caused by a sick civilisation. This sickness was characterised by "sedentary habits", "confused restlessness", "spectatoritis", "the weakened tradition of craftsmanship", "the ever-present availability of stimulants and tranquillisers", an "unseemly haste." By driving out worthwhile interests, modern life produced a "premature monopoly of sexual drives", which in turn destroyed the "treasures of childhood" (joy in movement, readiness for dedication, an enterprising curiosity, readiness to be involved in others' fates)—replacing them by four types of stunted adults: the lawless, the listless, the angry, and the "honourable sceptics." Hahn believed that education could prevent the deformities of puberty by arming the adolescent with a "*grande passion*"—something he could lose himself in. His was an activist plan, based not on waiting on a child's inclinations (which would always reflect the diseased environment), but on forcing him into a wide range of activities, exposing him to different kinds of experiences. This could only be done by transferring children from diseased environments to "healthy pastures." The school was to be the source and centre of a counter-culture.[1]

The recreation, through education, of healthy young adults, was the condition for the recreation of a healthy society. By preserving the "treasures of childhood" Hahn hoped particularly to counter civic apathy, lack of public spirit, the "decline of compassion", all of which he rooted in the deformities of puberty and which he regarded as the greatest threat to the survival of

[1] Hahn was not against co-education; he was just not, if I may put it that way, very interested in girls.

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democracy. Beyond this, he wanted to create an aristocracy of citizens to uphold the cause of truth and decency against popular passions: "education for leadership."

Many questions naturally arise. I would like to comment briefly on three: the psychological basis of Hahn's plan; his idea of education as counter-culture; and his notion of the type of education required for leadership.

To be sure, I don't know what causes the adverse changes in puberty, to what extent they are physiological or environmental, or how far they are temporary or permanent. Most educators would agree that a process of diseducation sets in about then. In general I am sympathetic to Hahn's view that this arises from an insufficiently stimulating and challenging environment, rather than being an inevitable stage of growth. However, I remain unhappy about what seems to be the artificial connection Hahn makes between social disease and sexual development. The "sexploitation" of youth for profit has become a major social problem in the last fifteen years or so. Hahn, however, was obsessed with the danger of "premature monopoly" of the sex drive before the 1939 War; and, I suspect, before the 1914 War as well. This may well have been a personal problem.

WILLIAM CURRY, the late headmaster of Dartington Hall, insisted that Hahn's "psychology has far more roots in his own emotional nature than in the nature of other human beings . . . ." As far as his views on sex go, I think this is right; and I think it is also true of A. S. Neill. Both, in their different ways, were obsessed with the impact of the sex drive on their pupils. It is easy enough to discover the source of this in Neill's case. Unfortunately, one knows (or I know) almost nothing about Hahn's early life. Until this biographical gap is filled, nothing definite can be said about the personal sources of his psychological theories.

A. S. Neill believed his own sexual development had been permanently stunted at the age of six when his mother caught him and his sister playing with each other's genitals, and gave the children a thrashing. His educational system can, I fear, be ultimately reduced to one simple principle: approval of childhood masturbation. Neill accepted the possibility that his own early childhood beating might have made him into "Neill the Great Educator", but he denied that the price was worth paying. In his system, public achievement is renounced for private happiness.

HAHN TOOK THE OPPOSITE VIEW, both in his educational system and in his life. My supposition would be that he was, or had been, a man of passionate sexual feelings kept under iron control, at great personal cost, and with great inner anguish. That much seems clear from the imagery he uses about adolescents, in which the "poisonous passions", characteristically "hot" and "inflamed", forever "thirsting" and "welling up", are to be extinguished by the cold douche of the "*grande passion.*" This is, I believe, what actually happened in Hahn's case, with education becoming the great sublimate, as it was with Cecil Reddie. But was the psychological anguish that went into the making of Hahn as a great Educator necessarily a valid model for his pupils? It is certainly questionable whether it is a necessary condition for achievement. One feels, with his critics, that Hahn may have set up too much of a sense of guilt in his Communities. Happily, this is not a case of having to lose the baby with the bathwater; for Hahn's educational ideas can survive independently of the sexual fears which may have fathered them.

To what extent, secondly, can education create or sustain a counter-culture? It has always had two purposes: to prepare children for Life-as-it-is, and also to give them a notion of a Good Life. When school education was confined to a leisured minority, or dominated by its needs, it was relatively easy to do both, since life-as-it-was for the schools' clientele was fortunately close to life-as-it-ought-to-be. Today the situation is quite different. Education has become society's main job-allocator and distributor of life-chances. It must be essentially "relevant" to life. Yet the life for which children are being prepared is the defective life of the urban megalopolis—"a long carnival of moral, intellectual, and artistic mediocrity."[2] Is education to be confined to the role of transmitting disease, or can it stand for a concept of health?

Hahn envisaged a nation-wide network of Day Boarding schools which would serve as health-giving centres for their communities.

> "Schools today have a duty to extend and deepen their responsibility. An environment must be created which produces beneficent impulses, impulses which used to be inescapable elements of daily life but in the society of today are almost extinguished."

To this end

> ". . . the semi-boarding school should be established about twelve miles away from the big town, with an old castle perhaps or some new buildings as the school house. It is important to avoid making it like an institution, or the school can never be felt as a sort of home. The site and the buildings should by their beauty alone induce a feeling of loyalty in the children who go there. There should be about

[2] Jean Floud, "Teaching in the Affluent Society", *British Journal of Sociology*, December 1962.

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> 500 in the school, and all age-groups should take their mid-day and evening meal together, in a well-designed dining hall and in civilised conditions. The early afternoon would be devoted to relaxation, with hours for sport, the guilds, crafts, and training in rescue service . . . . Every pupil would have a small 'study', a sort of private domain which he could furnish according to his own taste. During 'prep' a monastic silence should reign . . . [etc.]."[3]

ALAS, THE PROBLEM in much of urban Britain today is not to move forward to some new philosophy of education but to enable education to continue at all in the concrete jungles still called schools, where no visitor can venture for the fearful obscenities and hideous squalor. This takes us back from education to politics. We shall never get a decent educational system without an effectively decent political system. Until then, the "counter-cultural" argument is the strongest one I know for the preservation both of a private sector and of variety within the public sector.

LIKE ALL GREAT EDUCATORS, Hahn sought through education to realise his social ideals. Few, however, have had such a direct experience of politics as he had, particularly in Germany during the first World War; and it is to that experience one must trace his particular emphasis on moral courage as the supreme requirement for leadership. Hahn worked with the élite of the German liberal intelligentsia—and saw at first hand the rottenness of the German political system. The problem, as he saw it, was not the lack of clever men, but the fact that the clever men lacked the courage of their convictions. They failed to do what they knew was right. In 1918, Max Weber provided him with a different model of civic responsibility. Facing a Spartacist crowd in Berlin, Weber shouted defiantly, "All my life I have never crawled to Emperors and Kings, and I am not going to crawl to the mob now! . . ." Leadership by Hahn was seen largely in opposition to the "mob", just as education was in opposition to "society." The proliferation of mobs was part of the social disease.

Of course, this conception of civic virtue placed the educational emphasis back squarely on what the public-schools have always called "character building." When I wrote my book, I objected to the aim, and was highly sceptical about the methods. Today I am less critical on both counts.

To take methods first. I rather poked fun at Kurt Hahn's idea that success at the high jump can build up moral stamina. I still feel that should not be pressed too far. Nevertheless, isn't it quite reasonable to assume that physical confidence can help build up other types of confidence? More generally, in the wake of the publicity which has been given to the two great killers, heart disease and cancer, are we not all very much more conscious of the appalling cost and waste of illness, and of the fact that all our efforts are closely bound up with physical health and fitness? That this has to be carefully nurtured and that its nurture is made that much easier if good habits of diet, rest, and exercise are established early in life, now seems to me to be the merest common sense. I don't think Hahn was saying anything more than this.

I am more tolerant also of what I called at the time the moulding or indoctrinating tendencies of Hahn's system. Given the view of the school as a counter-culture, then I think it follows that education has to be highly interventionist. Hahn said that he wanted his schools to make such a powerful total impact that its students would carry the atmosphere of the school with them for the rest of their lives "as the diver carries his atmosphere to the bottom of the sea." Such results clearly require the use of non-rational techniques or what critics would call indoctrination. In theory, at least, Hahn was well aware of the dangers of what he called "unhealthy intolerance."

> "How to draw the proper frontier between the legitimate domain of efforts which are demanded and of efforts which are spontaneous remains the unsolved problem of education [he wrote to me, adding optimistically] . . . your book may help through releasing a lively discussion between those who reject and those who tolerate the moral anarchy which threatens present-day society."

In practice, Hahn was so obsessed with the dangers of moral anarchy that he greatly underestimated the claims of "efforts which are spontaneous"—in whose sphere must, by definition, be included the free play of the intellect. Herein, I think, lies the chief weakness of his system. As a result of experience and temperament, he assumed that the problem was not to foster "high intellectual capacity"[4] but to get people to speak the truth. Indeed, for democracy's salvation he looked to "people of quite ordinary talents who have strong convictions", and was fond of quoting Prince Max's dictum (how many of these dicta, one wonders, were his own?) that

> "the worth of a faith does not consist in the clarity with which it is stated but in the steadfastness with which it is defended."

What Hahn ignores in all this is that an important cause of civic escapism, the refusal to accept responsibility except in a very narrow sphere, arises from people's sheer ignorance and lack of general understanding of what is transpiring in

[3] Kurt Hahn, *Education and the Crisis of Democracy* (1962, privately circulated).

[4] The phrase is Lord James of Rusholme's in *Education and Democratic Leadership* (1961).

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their times. No one wants to make a fool of himself by exposing his jejune opinions on highly complicated questions to public scrutiny; and nothing is so likely to discredit moral courage as too many people with strong convictions and weak understandings. Hahn never appreciated the importance of what Maynard Keynes called the "ability to grasp the significance of what is happening." Indeed, what one critic has called his "moral fanaticism" may well have hindered free intellectual development, and its preconditions, in his schools.

If Kurt Hahn did not probe sufficiently deep into the so-called "sickness of modern society", if his emotional nature and limited experiences often led him to place emphases in wrong places, he nevertheless kept his attention concentrated firmly on the right questions. He was not afraid to act; and he never gave up striving for what he believed in face of ridicule, indifference, misunderstanding. He always thought the best of others. He will live on in the institutions he inspired; and his vision of youth and character will surely have a yet greater part to play when, and if, a saner idealism ever returns to our educational thinking.

Cumae: the Sybil

I
An ilex for Diana's hair,
A city solid as the air.

The stiff sails of Aeneas curl,
Find a temple stunned with gold.

Green leaves cannot hold their tongues,
Tablets are cut to Virgil's song.

The still sea goes hush-a-hush
Whose fish refuse Palinurus.

The price is high, her books are nine:
A murex robe spins for Tarquin.

II
Mourning Daedalus hoods his eyes,
Lizards thread the sunken maze.

His fingers will not limn his loss,
The bay wears blue for Icarus.

Chambered echoes are thrown, held;
The quarried glades of rock feel cold.

Aeneas calls the God by name,
His men break flint out into flame.

Three books burn: a sacrifice.
Proud flesh rises at Lucrece.

III
The wells are dry: rings of stone
Marry earth-flesh to earth-bone.

Furred and dumb, the Acropolis
Hangs its weight upon Aeneas.

Dark and bright speak volumes where
Cut blocks guide and thin the air.

Torn windows flay the light bare,
Misenus crackles on his pyre.

Three books burn. On the Capitol
The heads of Tarquin's poppies fall.

IV
The sun tricks out a bough with gold,
But all the forests are long felled.

Aeneas leaves his men behind,
A marble torso props the wind.

The birdless lake is brimmed with shade,
The solitudes are all betrayed.

A shipwreck of great masonry:
Rome is ash, the last books die.

His sword knows Tarquin cannot read.
The world's rivers run with blood.

Peter Scupham

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LETTERS

Lindsay Anderson & Declaration

IT IS SAD that almost twenty years after the publication of *Declaration*, Henry Fairlie (ENCOUNTER January) should remain as obsessively bad-tempered about its Angry Young authors, while himself advancing no further than their admittedly sketchy diagnosis of the sickness of our country. If as far.

Many of your readers will have forgotten (if indeed they ever knew) what precisely *Declaration* was. Since Henry Fairlie's account of it is as inaccurate as it is prejudiced, may I put the record straight? *Declaration* was never intended to be, and was never taken to be (except possibly by Mr Fairlie, who then I think was a Beaverbrook journalist) "the 'Manifesto' of the new 'Intellectual' Left in Britain." The brainchild of an enterprising young publisher, Tom Maschler, it was a collection of essays on the current British situation by a heterogeneous group of youngish artists and critics whose only common cause was an intense dissatisfaction with the way things were. It was published in 1957, the year after Suez and Hungary. This was the time of the *Universities and Left Review*, the English Stage Company's first season at the Royal Court, Free Cinema, and the first Aldermaston March.

The contributors to *Declaration* were certainly not all Left. Probably only Kenneth Tynan and Doris Lessing would have been prepared to call themselves Socialists. Colin Wilson, who had achieved instant fame with *The Outsider*, was emphatically Rightist. John Osborne, whose *Look Back In Anger* had hacked through the frozen surface of British theatre the year before, was emotional, radical, and traditional. What Mr Fairlie, as sour today as he was then, quite fails to convey is that the late 1950s were at least a time of controversy and radical attempt, far more healthy and far more fun than the wry, exhausted defeatism, the inane and dangerous revolutionary thrashing-around of today.

Maschler's book reflected this. It was essentially a journalistic enterprise in the realm of ideas. It succeeded in attracting a lot of attention, in helping to stir things up for a little while, selling quite a few copies and infuriating people like Mr Fairlie.

(The "Intellectual Left", by the way, disapproved strongly of *Declaration* and published its own Symposium a year later. This was called *Conviction*. It was edited by a *New Statesman* political columnist and fell flat on its face because it was so boring.)

Boulder, Colorado sounds the kind of place where an end-of-the-rainbow objectivity and wisdom might be found. Alas, Mr Fairlie labours and belabours to emerge from the struggle with conclusions distinctly mousey. "The British should engage themselves seriously in debate . . . language is somewhere at the heart of the question . . . ." Is that really all?

Language is symptomatic, not causal. Our "turning in on our own past" is not the result of the language we use. The language we use is only one of many symptoms of our refusal to face the present, our inability to face the future. Mr Fairlie may have travelled 5,000 miles from the Savoy Hotel; but he has carried the English Sickness with him. Just another terminal case, in fact, masquerading as a physician.

LINDSAY ANDERSON

London

Masani's Postscript

MAY I ADD a postscript to my ENCOUNTER letter [January]? Since I wrote my report there are a couple of interesting and not unhappy developments to report.

The detention order on Jayaprakash was withdrawn yesterday (4 December). But unfortunately he has been released in very bad shape and is now in hospital undergoing treatment on his kidneys which have been badly damaged during his 4½ months of being held incommunicado. He is cheerful, but I do not know how long we will have him with us.

The other development is that, on 25 November, I at last won my law suit in the Bombay High Court against arbitrary censorship of my monthly publication, *Freedom First*; but, since it is likely the other side will be appealing, further comment will have to be suspended.

MINOO MASANI

Bombay

Reviewing J. S. Mill

READERS of ENCOUNTER may be bewildered by Alan Ryan's letter in the December issue offering, as he says, a "second review" of my book on *Liberty and Liberalism*. Such interventions are common enough, and entirely proper, when a book has been severely and, it may seem to a reader, unfairly attacked. But if we were all to write second reviews to books that have been favourably reviewed, a whole new form of journalism would be created, of dubious merit.

Mr Ryan's letter seems all the more gratuitous since he offers not one bit of evidence to refute my book or to fault Mr Cranston's review of it ["Two Mills or one", ENCOUNTER, August 1975]. He wishes that Cranston, while rightly praising, as Ryan says, the "great brilliance" of my book, had been "a great deal fiercer in emphasising the perversity of the enterprise to which that brilliance was devoted." But all Ryan can do by way of fierceness in challenging my perverse thesis (that *On Liberty* is inconsistent with most of Mill's other writings) is to assert that all of Mill's writings displayed the same "obvious tensions", the same attempt to reconcile opposing claims and principles. Apart from the fact that Ryan has not advanced the argument beyond that flat assertion, it is curious that his defence against my charge of inconsistency should be the claim that all of Mill is inconsistent. With such friends, as the old saying goes, Mill needs no enemies.

Ryan concludes by taking me to task for ignoring the "scholarly efforts of such writers as Richard Wollheim and Donald Brown." It is curious to find these two scholars singled out from the legions of writers about Mill. Surely a more obvious authority to have cited, as one of the host I ignored, would have been Ryan himself, who has written not one but two books on Mill. I regret that I seem to have offended

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so many Mill authorities by not mentioning their work (which I assure them I have read). In my book I made a point of explaining why I had chosen, after a century of Mill criticism and commentaries, to return the discussion to its source—to try to read Mill himself as carefully and rigorously as possible. It is, of course, entirely legitimate to write a critique of Mill criticism, but that is quite a different enterprise from the one I set for myself. Perhaps some day I shall write such a critique—but I suspect Ryan will be no more pleased with it than he is with my present book.

GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB
Graduate School,
City University of New York

Socialist Anti-Semitism

Marx, Engels & Others—By MAX GELTMAN

YOUR AUTHORS Chaloner & Henderson are to be commended for pointing up some of the excesses in Marx's writings on the Jews [ENCOUNTER, July], but they are surely mistaken in assuming that "scholars on the continent" have been more aware of the fact that Karl Marx held anti-Semitic views than "their colleagues in England and America." The writings on the subject of such distinguished authorities as Edmund Silberner, Zosa Szajkowski, Robert F. Byrnes (among others) in such scholarly American journals as *Historia Judaica* and *Jewish Social Studies* are proof to the contrary. They are on more solid ground, however, when they speak of the "suppression of evidence" relating to the writings of Marx, although it is a greater scandal that so far it has been almost impossible to get a hearing for the "evidence" that *all* of international socialism—"in all countries", as Silberner has observed—has been infected with the anti-Semitic virus. I would fault them only for asserting that

> Engels' attitude towards the Jews was quite different from that of Marx. He had never denounced the Jews as a race of petty traders and money-lenders.

Actually, the most perfidious quotations from the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* cited by Chaloner and Henderson were written by Engels, as was the following:

> "Rendered infamous far and wide . . . as a full embodiment of profiteering, miserliness and filth, they [the Jews] have suddenly become German brothers . . . ."

This was a humourless attack on a certain Professor G. A. Schtensel who had argued the need for granting the Polish Jews of East Prussia German citizenship (*NRZ*, 9 August 1848).

Engels pursued the theme on 1 September, this time going after one Likhnovsky who had argued much as had Schtensel, by rendering a contemporary anti-Semitic couplet into good old German prose, as well as into good old-fashioned German anti-Semitism, to wit:

"Every place where, corrupting the German language horribly, the Polish Jew-usurer cheats, gives short weight, clips a coin or otherwise engages in common swindling", there you will find Herr Likhnovsky's German bretheren!

And, in the issue dated 29 April 1849 of the publication hailed by Lenin as a model of revolutionary journalism, both Marx and Engels accused the Jews of robbing churches, burning villages, and beating innocent Poles to death, at the same time pointing the accusing finger of revolutionary wrath at them as belonging to "the filthiest of all races." Engels may have been fond of the Iroquois (for primitive anthropological reasons), but he had no more use for backward "races" or nations than did Marx. Besides calling the Bulgarians "pigs", and finding almost the whole Slav "race" totally unredeemable, they found, on occasion, that Negroes belonged to a lower form of humanity. In a letter to Engels dated 7 August 1865, Marx wrote that "Tremoux has shown that the common Negro is merely a degenerate form of a higher type", and on 2 October 1866, Engels was apprised by Marx of the fact that "idiots and niggers [sic] are closely related." (There is no evidence that Engels objected to this.) And if Marx found the word "nigger" tripping lightly from his tongue, Engels found the word "Zhid" easy to deploy, as when he wrote with some irritation to Marx (November 1864), "I haven't witnessed so many Zhid intrigues simultaneously as at this time." But in a relatively short communication I must proceed apace, and the best place to start is in France where both Socialism and Socialist anti-Semitism began.

ZOSA SZAJKOWSKI was compelled to wind up his meticulous researches into the element of anti-Semitism to be found in the French socialist literature by adding a painful postscript in which he apologised to the readers for failure to find even one kind word for the Jews in it (*Jewish Social Studies*, January 1947). Saint-Simon lashed out at the "Jewish spirit of profit" . . . while Pierre Leroux (who probably coined the word "socialism") latched on to the Jew as Christ-killer, as did Alphonse Tousenel (who also influenced Marx to an extraordinary degree), while Fourier—"the best of the lot", as Engels informed Marx—contented himself with merely referring to the Jews as "vermin" and as the living embodiment of "Judas Iscariot." Meanwhile, the authentic leaders of French socialism, Jules Guesde and Jean Jaurès among them, joined the *anti*-Dreyfusard agitation in 1898, by issuing a manifesto calling for

> non-participation in the Dreyfus affair, on the ground that while the reaction wishes to exploit the conviction of one Jew to disqualify all Jews, Jewish capitalists would use the rehabilitation of a single Jew to wash out "all the sins of Israel." (Cited by Edmund Silberner, *Historia Judaica*, April 1954)

On his own, Jaurès added:

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O'Brien v. O'Dwyer: The Irish-American Complex

MY BROAD THEME *is the question of Irish-American relations in general. The particular aspect concerns relations between Irishmen living in Ireland and Irish-Americans. Paul O'Dwyer, the distinguished New Yorker, touched on this aspect during the course of a long interview which he gave to the* Irish Times. *He said a number of things during the course of that interview but one remark seems relevant to our conversation here today:*

"You and your friends" (he was talking to Maeve Binchy of the *Irish Times*) "may even be right in thinking that Irish Americans are over-simple in believing that all Ireland's problems would cease if Britain got out of the country. But over-simple or not that's what they think. As a group they have often felt isolated and are inclined to think that nobody wants anything from them except their dollars, their tourism, and their investment in Irish industry."

It is, of course, the case that we in Ireland are vitally dependent on a high and growing level of industrial investment in order to absorb our rapidly expanding population, which has followed the ending of net emigration and the earlier age of marriage. It is not so very long since a book with the title "The Vanishing Irish" *was quite widely read in America, and perhaps the idea that we are fading away is still around. But we are not fading away: quite the contrary—we are growing and any growth needs new investment.*

Paul O'Dwyer implied that Irish-Americans felt in some way shut out, that we in Ireland today resented their interest in political matters and in Northern Ireland. Not at all. We welcome such interest provided it respects the feelings, interests, and opinions of the actual living people of Ireland. It is the elected representatives of the people who represent those feelings, interests, and opinions. If Paul O'Dwyer is a democrat with a small "d" as well as a big one he has to accept that. But I am afraid the terms "Democrat" and "Republican" are both a bit ambiguous in an Irish-American context. Paul O'Dwyer, for example, is a Democrat in American politics and a Republican in Irish politics. It is not for me to make any comment on what the Republican tradition in America means. But in Ireland the Republican tradition to which Paul O'Dwyer and others belong is one that has claimed to set itself above democracy, and the humdrum results of democracy. The people have no right to be wrong—and Republicans, however small a minority they may be in, have a right to correct the errors of the people by force if necessary. That is the doctrine now being applied with the gun and the bomb by various armed gangs.

Paul O'Dwyer spoke of what he called

"the rift between Irish and Irish-Americans, a rift that the people of Ireland cannot afford to see developing."

I do not believe there is any such rift between Irish people generally and Irish-Americans generally. I do believe that a minority of Irish Republicans are interested in trying to produce such a rift, and to intimidate Irish people with the idea that they "cannot afford" such a rift.

The late Adolf Hitler, while his political career was drawing to a close, amid the ruins which it had caused, reflected that the German people had not proved worthy of him. I am afraid that there is a gentleman living in New York who seriously believes that the Irish people are not proving worthy of Paul O'Dwyer.

I have referred to Mr O'Dwyer's ideas not out of any animosity against him personally—there is nothing wrong with him except the form of Republicanism with which he has been infected—but because his ideas represent an element in Irish-American relations which needs to be combatted in the interest of the people living in Ireland, including the people whom I represent and those who elected the present Parliament and Government.

IT IS CLEAR THAT *certain Irish-Americans are attracted by the self-defeating activities of the I.R.A. I think it is also clear that other Americans, even major businesses, may, often unconsciously, play along with such things as social functions in support of front organisations such as "Northern Aid." No body of people is as well placed as you are to carry a message to any business interests who may be tempted to act in that misguided way. You can tell them that such activities are repudiated and resented by an overwhelming majority of the people here; you can tell them that they endanger lives and livelihoods, tourism, industry and trade. You can tell them that, because these activities have these effects, they are thereby damaging the work you are all trying to do in this country. You can ask them, please, to stop.*

A nation consists of people. It is not an abstraction, not lines drawn on a map, not just a slice of real estate. It is not a mystical concept to be appeased with periodical blood-sacrifices. The life of a nation is the accumulation of the lives of its individual people, the way they work, or don't work, the houses they live in, the schools their children go to. The best and indeed the only way that an effort to improve the life of the nation can work is by improving the ordinary lives of the individual citizens. To blow up the work-places and homes of the individual in the name of the "Unity of the Nation" must be recognised for the cruel contradiction that it is. As Eamon de Valera once remarked, the only way in which Irish unity can ultimately be achieved is by making the lives of our people so attractive that others will wish to join us.

Conor Cruise O'Brien

Minister in the Irish Republic's Cabinet, in a speech in Dublin to the American Chamber of Commerce

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> What is it still if not these Jews . . . effectively isolated by blood, religion, lucrative profession . . . who bend all free men under the yoke of money. What is therefore this Jewry if it is not a dangerous State within a State?

(In Tel Aviv they have named a street after Jaurès, probably because the martyred hero of French socialism said a few kind words about the Jews after the Dreyfus agitation had died down.)

By this time the virus had, indeed, spread throughout the world, infecting even the poor Arabs of North Africa! "Here [in Algeria]", proclaimed the French socialist Leo Chaze, at the turn of the century, "anti-Semitism has become a local form of socialism." And from Belgium was heard the word of the "intellectual flower of Belgian socialism", as Emil Vandervelde identified Senator Edmund Picard, who called on all "Aryan-proletarians" of the world to unite to shake off the shackles of international Jewry! (See his *Synthèse de l'Antisémitisme*.) From across the Channel, the English comrades were inoculated in a less ideological, if more demagogic, manner with the noxious poison, but none of it as virulent as that prescribed by Beatrice Webb who found much virtue in the Soviet Constitution under Stalin, and nothing but a lust for greedy profit among the poorest of the poor among the Jews of Whitechapel.

Meanwhile, on the continent, the Austrian Social-Democrats were preaching the virtues of anti-Semitism as the necessary "manure" to make sprout the seed of socialism, penning editorials in the party press to show the need of anti-Semitism to get the torpid peasant masses moving. Then came Karl Kautsky with all his erudition to prove that the Jews were neither a race, a nation or a people, but something (a "caste") that would disappear with capitalism. In fact, it is this identification of the Jew with the Capitalist—any Jew with any Capitalist—that is the hallmark of socialist anti-Semitism.

In 1906 August Bebel argued that it was time to abandon anti-Semitism as a tactic, at least for advanced, *i.e.* literate countries. "It is comforting to know", he wrote, "that in Germany anti-Semitism will never have a chance to exert a decisive influence upon the life of state and society." (*N.B.* "Scientific socialism" prides itself on its capacity to predict events.) The Jews, hearing this, relaxed their guard, but still found it "comforting" to hear what the great Comrade Bebel had said.

NOW A QUESTION ARISES. Why did so many Jews flock to the tainted banner of socialism when the evidence —and I have cited only fragments of it—showed that no branch of the movement, whether reformist or revolutionary, "scientific" or "utopian", national or international, held out any other promise for them but Total Assimilation or Death? The answer is both complex and simple. For the non-Jewish Jew (in Isaac Deutscher's terminology) assimilation into an amorphous, if faceless, revolutionary future held no dread. In fact, they welcomed it. As for the masses of European Jewry (those who spoke their socialism in *mameh lushen*), about them it can be truly said that they were never told the truth—the "evidence" was simply "suppressed."

The Jews who translate everything written by the Masters of international socialism have never to this day translated Marx's hideous essay on the Jewish question. (I am now preparing the first Yiddish translation of Marx's essay on the Jewish question that first saw the light of day in 1844.) They never knew that Marx had called for their utter disappearance from the face of the earth.

But the Jews of Europe—especially those representing the "filthiest of all races", didn't want to disappear, nor did those who opted (too soon) for a "benign" assimilation. Hitler made no distinctions, and neither will the Hitlers of the future.

MAX GELTMAN

New York City

Sir Oswald Mosley Replies

APART FROM RELUCTANCE to review reviewers, the spite of Mr Bogdanor's article on Mr Skidelsky's book about me in your June issue appeared too obvious to require any comment. Mr Barnett however in your November issue pretends to deal in facts. He was answered in advance in *My Life*, published in 1968 and 1970 by Thomas Nelson and re-issued by Sanctuary Press, 76a Rochester Row, London, S.W.1.

1. "Europeanism was grafted on as a new ideological conception." "As soon as I was free to speak after the war I stood for the union of Europe . . . For instance, 'the union of Europe becomes not only a desire or a dream but a necessity' " (November 15, 1946). In 1948 I declared for Europe a Nation (*My Life*, p. 413). In fact my previous opposition to the War had two main objects: to prevent the loss of British Empire and the division of Europe. Both have now occurred.

2. "Provocative marches and meetings in north-east London." In the 1937 LCC elections British Union polled an average of over 19% in East London. Is it contended that this should have been a closed area to post-War propaganda marches at the time they were being held all over the country? Such a demand from a Jewish minority might indeed create anti-Semitism. My own quarrel not with all but with some Jews before the War arose from their drive to war with Germany and their attacks on our movement.

3. "The coloured immigrants." Is it seriously contended that I had no right in 1955 to ask for a halt to immigration into an already overcrowded island? The problem was then easily soluble without hardship to anyone. At that time there were only 300,000; there are now nearly two million.

The febrile prejudice both of Mr Bogdanor and of his supporter Mr Barnett will easily be recognised by anyone interested to study the facts cited either in Mr Skidelsky's book or in *My Life*.

O. MOSLEY

Orsay, France

Winchester?

THAT "implacable Professor" John Austin once said: "Although I am not sure importance is important, truth is."

So it is just worth noticing that George Watson was in error when he wrote: "Edward Thompson was schooled at Winchester" [ENCOUNTER, October]. I believe that Watson was thinking of Edward's elder

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Life & Letters Today

London

"SMERSH": Do I think that "Smersh" is American slang? Of course I do not [Nicholas Bethell writes]. Everyone from James Bond up knows that "Smersh" means "smyert shpionam" or "death to spies." I think it is clear from my review of *The Gulag Archipelago* that what I was objecting to was the use of words like "bums" and "broads" in a translation. They are too American. "Yobbos" and "birds" would be equally inappropriate. They are too British.

It is a problem that translators are often faced with, how to render slang without adding confusing overtones. One has to try to find a middle way.

THE TIMES

London

DIVINE CHOICE: *The Prime Minister [Harold Wilson] though he worships in both Anglican and Methodist churches, is not as religious-minded as some of his predecessors, for instance Lord Home (though he is more religious-minded than some, e.g. Churchill). Not long ago, he had to read the lesson in Westminster Abbey, and the Dean asked him whether he wanted to read from the Authorised Version, or the Jerusalem Bible, or perhaps the New English Bible. The Prime Minister was evidently bewildered by the choice, but equal to the question. 'I'll read the word of God', he said firmly.*

THE OBSERVER

London

NOUNS & ADJECTIVES: Expendable nonsense clusters around the idea of a Government of "national unity". A coalition of all the able men in all parties, it is argued, would ensure the maximum of political support for a government that would need to make unpopular decisions.

There is a grammatical difficulty to be cleared away here. Of "ability" in the abstract the political world knows nothing. A politician is able to do some things well and does others badly. "Able", like "moderate", is an adjective, not a noun. Neither word should have been allowed by political writers to set up in business on its own.

THE TIMES

New York City

FORKED TONGUE: Yassir Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, has been voted this year's public doublespeak award by the National Council of Teachers of the English Language. He got the award for his response to an interviewer who asked him to comment on Israeli charges that he wants to destroy Israel. "They are wrong", Arafat said. "We do not want to destroy any people. It is precisely because we have been advocating co-existence that we have shed so much blood."

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

London

POETRY CORNER: A tape recording of a "bastardised" version of the poem "Mad Carew," in which the words were followed by choking sounds was played at a Broadmoor inquest yesterday.

The recording was found in the room of a patient Neville Barlow, 21, whose body a male nurse alleged he had seen being dragged along a corridor by another patient, William Clarke, 53. Barlow had been strangled.

The "bastardised" version went something like:

"A dizzy blonde named Sue, who lives in Waterloo and is known from Marble Arch to Camden Town" and continued with a line which said something about her "satisfying Mad Carew whenever he's around."

At the end of one verse the tape had stopped. "When it started again there was some phrase which is difficult to decipher—it sounds like 'the only sods' or the 'older sods'. Then following what I can only describe as a strangulation sequence." A pseudo-psychiatric monologue continued for the rest of the tape.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

PROVERBIAL: *Mr Brian Haddow, a teacher and one of the immortal "William Tyndale Seven", it was reported at the inquiry into the running of his school, once wrote on a blackboard one of Blake's* Proverbs of Hell: *"The Tigers of Wrath are Wiser than the Horses of Instruction."*

Sifted through various dim, educational and politically conscious minds, this became "The Tigers of Destruction are Stronger than the Horses of Instruction", "The Tigers of Destruction are more Beautiful than the Horses of Industry" and ended up in a newspaper as "A Thought of Chairman Mao: the Smile on the Face of the Tiger is Revolution."

Blake himself [Peter Simple writes] might have had something to say about this dreary, depoeticising process. His proverbs—they are like very beautiful cracker-mottoes—used at one time to appear quite often as graffiti on the walls of colleges at Oxford and Cambridge: "The Road of Excess leads to the Palace of Wisdom"; "The Lust of the Goat is the Bounty of God"; "Sooner Murder an Infant in its Cradle than Nurse Unacted Desires" (sometimes amended as ". . . than Wash your Car on a Sunday Morning").

One proverb of Blake's which did not *appear, to my knowledge, was "One Law for the Lion and the Ox is Oppression"—a socially divisive, élitist saying which lets the side down badly.*

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

SLEEPER: Dame Agatha Christie made more people happy in bed than any woman since the world began.

THE GUARDIAN

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brother Frank. I know that Edward Thompson was at Kingswood School, Bath; because we were there together for many years.

Department of Philosophy ANTONY FLEW
University of Reading

Frank Lloyd Wright as "Pupil"

JAMES MOORE [Letters, August] prejudices the case of Gurdjieff's influence by including Frank Lloyd Wright among his "pupils." If the stature of a Levantine spiritualist is augmented by enlisting "pupils-in-law", the case cannot be so certain. Wright married a dancer half his age who left Gurdjieff's demonstration troupe on tour in the United States in 1924. It was undoubtedly Olgivanna Milanoff's aristocratic Montenegrin bearing and mysterious charm that attracted him. Although Wright met Gurdjieff both in France and in America, he felt free to interrupt demonstrations his wife presented with comment and conversation not always in sympathy with the proceedings.

The effect of a mystic spirit on a man who produced masterly arrangements of the earthly, material world might be curiosity, but was surely far from making him give up his own orbit of pupils to become a disciple of his young wife's former master.

Iowa State University SIDNEY K. ROBINSON

On Pseudonymity

THANK YOU for printing Professor Elwell-Sutton's much-needed article debunking Idries Shah (May 1975). Since several letter-writers have debated whether *The Teachers of Gurdjieff* by Rafael Lefort (A Real Effort?) is pseudonymous and whether Shah himself wrote it, I enclose a letter he sent me (22 Feb, 1969), declaring, "I really have no information about Mr. Lefort's book . . . and certainly have no reason to suppose that it is 'a fraud.' As to whether it is pseudonymous and what the Author's name means . . . I think that that kind of thing is a game which people, especially academics, feel that they need." Is this another of Shah's poses, like pretending that he possesses the truth about the universe and that Jesus was a Sufi? I also enclose a letter from Lefort's London publishers (Gollancz) stating, "Rafael Lefort is a pseudonym, and he does not allow his identity to be known." I will furnish copies of these letters to anybody who wants them.

Brookings, South Dakota DEXTER MARTIN

INDEX TO VOLUME XLV

THE INDEX to Volume XLV (July-December 1975) is now available and will be sent, free of charge, on application to ENCOUNTER, 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS. Standing orders for future indexes can also be accepted.

Readers who have already applied to be put on the standing order list need not apply again, as they will receive the new index automatically, together with the delayed January–June index.

AUTHORS

Malcolm Bradbury is Professor of American Literature, University of East Anglia. His most recent novel is *The History Man* (Secker, 1975).

Lord Ashby's article is an edited version of the 21st Fawley Foundation Lecture, delivered at the University of Southampton last December and reproduced by kind permission of the Vice-Chancellor.

Kenneth Hudson has published many books on industrial archaeology; his recent publications are *A Social History of Museums* (Macmillan Press, 1975) and *The Archaeology of Industry*, to be published this spring by Bodley Head.

Robert Strausz-Hupé was formerly Professor of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania and U.S. Ambassador to Ceylon and to Belgium; and he is now U.S. Ambassador to Sweden.

William Letwin is Reader in the Government and Politics of the United States at the London School of Economics. His books include *The Origins of Scientific Economics* (Methuen, 1963) and *Law and Economic Policy in America* (Edinburgh University Press, 1968). His article on Adam Smith forms the introduction to the Everyman Library reissue of *The Wealth of Nations*, published by J. M. Dent.

Stephen Miller has written on politics and literature for *Dissent*, *The New Leader*, and *The New York Times Book Review*.

Maurice Cranston is Professor of Political Science at the London School of Economics. His books include *Politics and Ethics* (1972), *What are Human Rights?* (rev. ed. Bodley Head, 1973), and *The Mask of Politics* (Allen Lane, 1973).

François Bondy is an editor of *Die Weltwoche*, Zurich.

J. M. Cocking was until his recent retirement Professor of French Language and Literature at King's College, University of London.

Donald MacRae is Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics. He is the author of *Ideology and Sociology* (Heinemann, 1961) and of the volume on Max Weber in the Fontana Modern Masters series (1974).

E. P. Hennock is Reader in History at the University of Sussex, and the author of *Fit and Proper Persons: Ideal and Reality in 19th-Century Urban Government* (Edward Arnold, 1973).

Max Beloff was Gladstone Professor of Government and Public Administration, Oxford University, from 1957–74; he is now Principal of the University College at Buckingham.

Peter Laslett is Reader in the Politics and History of Social Structure, University of Cambridge, a Director of the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, and a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.

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"ENCOUNTER has made up more minds than any other intellectual journal of our time . . ."

A reader writes:

". . . We are a polyglot bunch here at the Common Market headquarters. We read *Le Monde, The Times,* the *Herald-Tribune,* the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung,* the *Corriere,* and what-not every day. We look at *Der Spiegel,* and *L'Express,* and leaf through *Time, Newsweek,* etc., etc. . . . But may I tell you that nothing on any day or in any week gives many of us so much pleasure—and so much instruction—as the monthly copy of the new ENCOUNTER. That it comes from England, so often taken to be provincial and "off-shore", gives us special cosmopolitan pleasure. . . . It is the one journal that gives us the feeling that we are indeed in touch with the main intellectual currents of European—no, I should say Western—civilisation. . . ."

L.C. (Brussels)

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